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A Tshimburak or Private of the Camel Artillery.

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NARRATIVE

OF A

JOURNEY INTO PERSIA,

IN THE SUITE OF

THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN EMBASSY,

IN THE YEAR 1817.

By MORITZ VON KOTZEBUE,

CAPTAIN ON THE STAFF OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY, KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF ST. WLADIMIR OF RUSSIA, AND OF THE PERSIAN ORDER OF THE SUN AND LION.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

ILLUSTRATED BY PLATES.

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THE TRANSLATOR.

In submitting the following Volume to the Public, the Translator is actuated by a double motive. He is, in the first place, anxious to gratify the curiosity which has long since been excited by the promised account of the proceedings of the late Russian Embassy in Persia; and he is also glad to seize an opportunity of adding some information respecting a country, of which, until lately, little has been known in Europe.

The English language, undoubtedly, possesses works upon Persia, which, in point of research, have not been rivalled in the literature of any other country : indeed, no nation has done more than our own to extend a scientific knowledge of the most distant parts of the globe. Yet it may not be unimportant to know what other nations think of countries remote from the influence of European civilisation ; and thus to view distant and strange objects, as it were, through other minds than our own. This consideration cannot fail to have its weight as applied to Persia. The relations of Russia with her Asiatic neighbour are not to be viewed with unconcern by other states ; and still less so, if the reserve of her government should operate to exclude us from a knowledge of the circumstances which gave rise to this splendid Embassy,

and of its actual result. For these reasons, it is hoped that the present translation will be deemed acceptable, as conveying a description, by an eye-witness, of the manner in which the Mission was received, and the impression which it made upon the Court of Persia; for, as it is said by Lord Bacon, "The things to be seen and observed are the Courts of Princes, especially when they give audience to Ambassadors."

that some indulgence may be shown to the artless, perhaps rather unpolished style of a seaman and a soldier, whose time, from his early youth, has been actively spent in the duties of both these professions. He flatters himself, on the other hand, that his observations, which, in truth, appear to me spirited and lively, will not be found uninteresting, as they have been dictated by the strictest regard to truth.

This is all that I have to submit to the public on behalf of the Author.

AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE.

WEIMAR,
April, 1818.

JOURNEY TO PERSIA.

THERE are individuals who appear destined to be ever bustling through the world. Shifted continually from one scene to another; compelled, whether willingly or not, to adapt themselves to the good or the evil which befalls them; who would undertake to call such men happy? They imperceptibly acquire that general constitution of the mind which may indeed render them fit to move on the great theatre of the world, but which cannot fail to incapacitate them for the calm enjoyments of domestic life; and what can compensate them for the loss of these?

It has hitherto been my lot to be thus made the sport of fortune. At the age of sixteen I sailed round the world. I was eighteen, when, amidst the tumult of war at Friedland, I had an arm shattered by a

grape-shot. In my twenty-fourth year, I again fought the battles of my country under the gallant Count Wittgenstein, and had the misfortune to be taken prisoner. I was marched to France, liberated by my victorious countrymen, and sent back with them, only to re-enter the field against Bonaparte. When these fresh troubles were appeased, the division of the army to which I belonged was sent into cantonments in the neighbourhood of Charkow, to enjoy repose. I arrived there about the month of May, 1816, with my worthy commander, Adjutant-General Baron Korff. The estates of his father-in-law lay in the neighbourhood. His amiable wife had not seen him during many years: rejoicings took place, and lasted several weeks, until, satiated with the intoxication of enjoyment, we returned to the sober pleasures of our domestic circles. Winter had imperceptibly passed away, and nature was again reviving, when my General was appointed to the command of a *corps d'armée*, and I received orders

from the quarter-master-general to proceed with all speed to St. Petersburgh.

My separation from the general and his family is a subject of painful recollection. I left my early friend, Colonel Howen, about to become a happy bridegroom, and was not even allowed to be present at his marriage. It was not, therefore, in the sweetest humour that I threw myself into a Russian post-waggon, and set out on my journey.

I had the pleasure of travelling over a heavy road, through eternal forests, enlivened by surly post-masters. At Smolensko, which has suffered very considerably from the late war, the post-master point blank refused to furnish me with horses, unless I paid double fare; and at the opposite inn the treatment was nearly as bad as being skinned alive. A heap of Podoroschnas (passport-orders for post-horses), which lay in a corner of a window, afforded me convincing proofs that the post-master was not trifling with me, and that much greater

men than myself had been waiting there all day. Well, thought I, here are gentlemen more inclined, and having better means to enrich mine host, so I talked loud, paid the double fare, and wished the worthy company good morning. I soon got clear of the dirty road, but only to exchange it for the greater torture of the famous knüppelbrücke, which runs the whole way from Weliki-Luki to St. Petersburgh. I would advise all persons who may still hope to have further occasion for the use of their bones, to avoid this dreadful road. I soon perceived the beautiful town of Gatschina, and arrived the same evening in St. Petersburgh, where I alighted at the Hotel de Reval. Anxious to ascertain the real nature of my destination, I, on the following morning, arrayed myself in full dress, and proceeded to the quarters of the general staff, to wait upon my chief, the Adjutant-General Prince Wolkonsky.

His Excellency does not generally give audience before two o'clock. I therefore employed the intervening period in calling

upon some old friends, from whom I learnt, to my astonishment, that I was appointed to accompany a mission to Persia. The Prince soon afterwards confirmed this statement, and further acquainted me, that he intended to send me to the privy-councillor and astronomer, Schubert, to perfect myself in the study of astronomical science, during the two months that would precede my departure. With my head full of astronomy and Persia, I went to the gymnasium, to enquire after my brothers, Augustus and Paul, whom I had not seen for five years. They were, however, spending the holidays with my father's friend, the councillor of state, Würst; and I only met them a few days afterwards, at a house which became my favourite resort, and I may add my only recreation during my stay in St. Petersburgh. The dry calculations of science often made me peevish, and unfit to mix in gay circles; but at this house I always experienced a welcome reception.

I soon learnt that one of my friends,

Paul de Rennenkampff, was also appointed to the mission, and moreover directed like myself to attend M. Schubert. We resolved to live together, and I joined him at Wassili-Ostroff. The celebrated and venerable man who was appointed to teach us, showed the utmost patience throughout his task, and knew so well how to enliven long and tedious calculations by instructive and agreeable conversation, that he daily acquired fresh claims to our admiration; and we passed whole nights in study, in order to save him the trouble of repetition. Our connection with him procured us the happiness of being admitted to the well-informed circle which every Monday assembles at his house.

In the month of August, we had nearly completed our course of study, and we were presented to the ambassador, Lieutenant-General Jermoloff, the same officer who, in the year 1807, so highly distinguished himself at the head of the artillery, and who subsequently acted so important a

part at the battle of Culm, which may be said to have at that period decided the fate of Europe. He received us, in truth, more as our friend than as our superior; and we must all admit to his praise, that he invariably observed the same line of conduct. My friend and I were delighted with him to enthusiasm; and we hastened to communicate our satisfaction to our venerable teacher, who was pleased to take a great interest in what concerned us. We learnt soon afterwards, that the ambassador was about to leave St. Petersburgh, and that all the members of the mission were at liberty to travel as they pleased, provided that they were all assembled at Tiflis in the month of November. Colonel de Iwanoff, who had been appointed chief of the staff in Grusia, and who likewise belonged to the embassy, obtained from Prince Wolkonsky a carriage for the conveyance of the astronomical clocks and instruments. I took my seat in this vehicle, and we all left the beautiful city of St.

Petersburgh on the 17th of August. Rennenkampff went first to see his relations in Livonia, and afterwards joined us at Moscow.

On leaving the city, in the dusk of the evening, each of us sunk sorrowfully into his corner of the carriage. I reflected on the singular decree of fate, which, after having so long tossed me about in every direction, now sent me, packed up with astronomical clocks, to Persia, a country that used to inspire my boyish mind with no ordinary degree of awe when I contemplated its swarthy inhabitants in books of prints. Scorpions, tarantulas, and phalangia, I had heard so much talked of at St. Petersburgh, that I now shuddered at the bare thought of them. The plague and similar trifles were reckoned among the ordinary evils. I must confess I left dear Europe very unwillingly; for, after all, what does a man gain by its being said of him, that he too has been in Persia?

I tortured my mind by a thousand fanciful pictures of the future; my travelling com-

panion was more wise, he slept. Sleep makes us satisfied with the whole world, and I imitated his example. We must thus have travelled several stages, for when we awoke the day was dawning, and we soon felt the approach of hunger, that evil spirit that torments the traveller. Here we perceived that no fond mother had superintended the arrangements of our departure from St. Petersburgh: we missed the well-stored basket and the exhilarating flask: and although some obliging friends had provided us with a little wine, yet provisions were only to be had at an exorbitant price. After experiencing many hardships, we reached Moscow on the sixth day. The Emperor had arrived there a few days before us, and his presence increased the bustle of this great city.

Although born in Russia, and although I had travelled in several of its provinces, I had not hitherto had an opportunity of seeing Moscow. Notwithstanding the dread-

ful conflagration, the city has lost nothing of its magnitude. Many of the palaces still bear marks of the fire. I apprehend, there are no where so many splendid edifices, although every thing is heaped together in the greatest confusion; palaces are surrounded by wretched hovels, and the avenues to magnificent bridges are narrow and dangerous footpaths. But I must confess, that an air of grandeur reigns over the whole, and that the confusion itself is interesting. The Emperor has promised the inhabitants that he will pass the next year at Moscow: his presence will stimulate their activity; and I hope that the great pillar which was to have been formed out of the captured guns of the enemy, and which I looked for in vain, will be erected at last.

We left Moscow on the 27th, and arrived at the same time as the Emperor at the pretty little town of Tula, celebrated for its manufactories of hardware, the articles of which are very neat, and remark-

ably cheap. I was much pleased with the agreeable situation of the town, and with the neatness of its houses.

After staying there a few days, we set out, by way of Woronesch, for Nowotscherkask, the chief town of the Cossack country. Beyond the former place, the country immediately assumes a naked and desolate appearance. The service of the posts is performed so wretchedly, that a whole day is consumed in crawling from one stage to another. Unless a traveller take a supply of provisions at Woronesch, he cannot escape dying of hunger on the road. I observed that all our postilions lived upon water-melons, which are found in this country in great excellence. The post-houses are miserable little sheds.

The Cossacks disdain to engage in agricultural pursuits, for they find it both more agreeable and convenient to draw their means of support from the breeding of cattle, from fishing, and trade. This may be the reason why there is not a green field, a

tree, or a single plantation to relieve the wearied eye of the traveller. Surrounded by endless wastes, he sees nothing but the windings of the road that he pursues.

The town of Nowotscherkask, the residence of the Hetman Platoff, begins to assume a stately appearance; but on the least rain, the whole place swims in mud. The dwelling-houses of the inhabitants are punctiliously neat. Cleanliness is properly one of the religious observances of a sect called Roskolniks, to which most Cossacks belong. When a Russian has resided among them, the apartment which he occupied, the utensils which he used, in short every thing that he touched, must undergo scouring and fumigation, and the priests consecrate anew the polluted objects. Should tobacco have been smoked, all these proceedings must be repeated several times; nay, a very devout sectary would even rebuild his house. In every dwelling there is a press with a glass-door, through which may be seen silver spoons of every size and fashion,

goblets from all quarters of the world, still displaying heraldic achievements, knives and forks, and an infinite variety of other articles; but the good Cossacks have fought bravely, and they may well be forgiven for having indulged their taste for antiquities. The Don wine really deserves praise; it is light, has a mild and agreeable taste, and sparkles like Champaign.

The horses which we got at Nowotscherkask did not carry us out of the town more expeditiously than we had reached it; and it cost us several hours of laborious exertion to ascend the first hill that we encountered. In two days we reached Wanutschei Jerlik, the quarantine station on the frontier. The sight of this place promised no great satisfaction to us on our return; as we should be obliged to stay there several weeks to be fumigated.

From this place onwards, the villages are all peopled by Russian settlers, which is immediately observed from the good condition of the horses. The limits of the Cau-

casian government begin here. We soon perceived the town of Stawrapol. An involuntary exclamation of joy burst from us at the sight of trees, a pleasure of which we had been so long deprived. From the post-house the majestic Elburus is seen towering above the clouds. M. de Wischnefsky, the astronomer, has measured this mountain, and ascertained its elevation to be 16,700 French feet.*

It is unsafe to travel beyond Stawrapol without protection, and accordingly there are parties of Cossacks at every stage, ready to escort travellers. The distance to Georgefsk is about sixty wersts, the road following the direction of the river Kuba, which winds along the base of the Caucasian mountains. The country beyond this river is

* This mountain, the most elevated of the Caucasian chain, had formerly been estimated by Professor Pallas to be equal in height to Mont Blanc; but it would appear from the above statement, that it is actually 2000 feet higher. — TRANSLATOR.

inhabited by the Tserkesses, the Kabardins, &c. who are all desperate robbers. Tormented by hunger and the plague, they frequently solicit the friendship of the Russians, and deliver hostages to them, as pledges of their desire to live on amicable terms: but these promises are soon forgotten; and they eagerly seize the first favourable opportunity to carry off both persons and things, and generally to plunder wherever they can. They mostly attend to the breeding of cattle, fishing, and hunting in all its branches. Agriculture, which is not very compatible with their habits, little engages their attention. The laborious offices of life are all performed by the women; the men are ashamed of working; they are held in estimation by their tribes in proportion to the number of robberies and murders which they may have committed. In order to increase the interest which may be felt for these amiable savages, I must add, that they never scruple to murder each other. They consider sanguinary re-

venge a most sacred duty, which must never be neglected; and the first murder that was committed among their ancestors, will be revenged from age to age, by one tribe upon the other. Although the offended and the offending families know each other perfectly well, their revenge is never exercised but in a treacherous manner, either in a forest, a moor, or in some other place where there are no witnesses. It therefore not unfrequently happens, that many years elapse before the injured party succeeds in sacrificing his victim. But from that moment he returns to his home in triumph, and it now becomes the duty of the other family to seek revenge. If the perpetrator of the murder die, his next relation knows that it will be revenged on him. They behave in the same manner to the Russians. If, during a skirmish, a mountaineer be killed, his next relation does not rest until he obtains the head of a Russian; but should one of his companions in the mean time succeed in catching the identical

offender, he sells him at a dear price to the other, who gluts his ferocity in the slow murder of his unfortunate victim. What a people to disgrace the ranks of mankind! Thanks, however, to Providence (and the Turks, who occasionally send them the plague) there is some check to the extension of these noxious weeds. If the Russian government could dishonourably render themselves guilty of that negligence which characterises the proceedings of the Ottoman administration, a good plague would exterminate at once this brood of vipers; but the only punishment which is inflicted upon them, is an occasional military expedition into the mountains, to destroy their houses and drive away their cattle. Too cowardly to defend their dwellings, when attacked, they run into the mountains, pray forgiveness, deliver hostages, and make promises which they never keep. The Mahomedan laws forbid their adoption of any measure whatever to guard themselves against the plague; they con-

sider it as a dispensation of Providence, and die resigned to their fate. There is another people surpassing the Kabardins, the Tserkesses, and generally all the mountain tribes, in the virtues which I have described; I allude to the Tshetshenzes, who inhabit an inaccessible part of the Caucasus, and endanger the security of our military road. They were formerly tributary to the Kabardins, but are now independent, and excel their ancient masters in the arts of depredation.

General Delpozo, the present commander-in-chief on the Caucasian frontier, who is a veteran of seventy, had the misfortune some years back to be made prisoner by the Tshetshenzes. They welcome their captives by fettering their hands and feet, and chaining them by the neck during the night. They torture them in proportion as they think them rich, and give them the means of writing to the Russian government, in the hopes of obtaining thereby more money, in a more expeditious manner.

The Russian peasants who fall into their hands are treated more leniently; they are not subjected to any personal restraint, and are merely compelled to work. Although they allowed themselves to ill treat General Delpozo, yet they respected his years and his rank, and on every occasion of violent altercation, they appealed to his judgment, and submitted without a murmur to his decision. When, after many months of suffering, the General was at last ransomed, they said to him, "Papinka" (little papa) "forgive us for having ill used thee;" but they required, notwithstanding, a handsome sum of money for taking off his fetters. They did not, however, gain much by this transaction; their cattle having been driven too far into the valley, were surprised and captured; the whole herd fell into the hands of the Russians, and was publicly sold for the same sum which had been paid as the General's ransom. Major Swezoff fared, however, much worse; he remained in their hands during a year and

a half, and has only now been liberated through the particular exertions of the commander-in-chief. It really redounds to General Jermoloff's eternal honour, that he has, in so short a period, succeeded, if not in bringing these people to a sense of obedience, at least in inducing them to deliver up hostages, and promise to remain quiet. The military road has since then been more safe.

At Sewernoe, which almost equally divides the distance between Stawrapol and Georgefsk, we, for the first time, saw the majestic chain of the Caucasian mountains, whose snowy summits shed around the most variegated colours. These tremendous masses, which are piled upon each other with a confusion not to be described, soar into the clouds, and present a most awful and terrific spectacle. The Elburus and the Casebeck stand like mighty props at the ends of the chain. The Peak of Teneriffe, on account of its insulated situation and conical form, is a magnificent sight, but it cannot be

compared to these mountains. The inhabitants speak of a place, situated, according to their calculation, half way up the mountain, beyond which no mortal dares ascend; a dreadful wind chills the unhappy wanderer to instant death; and birds which venture into this region, drop lifeless to the ground. The spirits of the dead are even distinctly heard to groan! But to be serious, it would seem that some powerful stream of air issuing from the immense granitic gulfs that surround this mountain, blasts every living creature which encounters it.

On the 20th September we reached Georgefsk, where I became acquainted with General Delpozo. The ambassador also arrived a few days after us, and took by surprise the public authorities assembled to receive him. He drove up in a plain post carriage, and to the enquiries of the impatient gentlemen, who were asking him how far off the ambassador still was, he

replied by leaping among them, and saying, "here he is."

The plague is frequently prevalent at Georgefsk, and particularly in the hospital, which General Delpozo nevertheless visits daily, taking the precaution first to wash his hands in vinegar, and particularly to avoid allowing his clothes to come in contact with any thing. Singular opinions are entertained with respect to the process of contagion. Some individuals who have touched infected persons, have not, it is said, caught the disease; while others have had that misfortune, who were unconscious of having committed any imprudence. There is said to be a particular disposition of the human frame which renders it very slightly, perhaps not at all, susceptible of the deadly poison. In spring and autumn, the contagion is most dangerous. Its preliminary symptom is a pain in the side, which is followed by a violent head-ache, and subsequently by swellings, generally in the arm-pits; the wild stare ensues, the mouth

foams, and the patient dies. Livid spots generally break out on the body after dissolution, but when they appear before death, it is considered a favourable symptom. There are frequent instances of the swellings bursting, and then the patient is saved. The plague comes as it goes, nobody knows from whence nor whither. It is said that the eating copiously of garlic, is a preservative against contagion. I have shuddered when I have heard several of my friends speak of this dreadful malady, which they had frequently witnessed in Grusia. All social communication is put an end to. Every person becomes a prisoner in his own house. Nobody is seen in the streets except criminals, who, clothed in oil-skin clokes, drag the dead bodies by means of long tongs out of the town, to throw them into one common pit. The inhabitants anxiously enquire from the windows after their friends and acquaintance. *Such a one,* is the reply, *lies already in the grave; another has fallen ill yester-*

day; every one thinks that his own turn will come to-morrow. But what can exceed the distress which must ensue in a family, when one of its members is attacked by the awful symptoms? All assistance must be withheld, the unfortunate victim expires in their view in the most horrible torture, and the oil-skin clokes are called from the window. They have not always leisure, however, to attend to every call, and not unfrequently, the body of the deceased lies a whole day in the house, until yielding to solicitation, they at last drag it with their tongs through a window, together with all the clothes which had been worn or touched by the dead person. When once a fatal case has occurred in a house, it is generally followed by others in the same family, as it is impossible to take such precautions as may have absolutely prevented contact with some infected substance. A person also frequently carries with him the seeds of contagion, before the real symptoms of the plague have broken out; and thus the

malady extends its ravages, until only the last individual is left to die without help, in dreary solitude. I need not dwell upon the inconvenience which must be felt with regard to provisions. When the danger of contagion has begun to subside, when death is tired with destruction, and the suspected sick have been safely lodged in the hospital, the houses are gradually opened, and living ghosts are seen crawling out, to congratulate each other on being alive, but still cautiously abstaining from a friendly shake of the hand. The most punctilious courtesy reigns in the streets, and every passenger keeps at a respectful distance from another. Fathers have lost their children, husbands their wives; others, the relics of numerous families, find themselves solitary occupants of large houses, where every thing reminds them of their losses. According to the custom of the country, the dead howl is raised, and all run in despair to the churches to pour forth their prayers and supplications.

During the prevalence of the plague, many persons bury articles of their property, under the idea that they are free from infection: if they live, these articles are dug up, and before the matter is thought of, the plague is again disseminated. It has been maintained, that articles thus dug up after many years, have circulated the virus of contagion. The best process of purifying suspicious clothes, is to expose them as long as possible to the sun and air.

The town of Georgefsk lies in a situation which is said to be very unhealthy. I was glad to escape from it on the 28th of September; for I had taken a great dislike to the place, on account of a very pretty country woman of mine, having here, in a very short time, fallen a victim to the climate. The warm baths, which are situated in its neighbourhood, are said to be the most salutary of any known in Europe. The present Governor has also taken care to have commodious houses erected for the reception of travellers, who were hither-

to obliged to live in very inconvenient cabins.

The road from Georgefsk to Mosdok winds along the river Terek, which follows the direction of the Caucasus, and flows into the Caspian Sea not far from Kislar. The Kabardins molest this district; for although they call themselves our friends, yet they cannot resist the temptation of plundering. The ambassador soon followed us to Mosdok, where we remained a few days to make preparations for crossing the Caucasus. On the 2d of October our arrangements were completed, and we assembled at the ferry of the Terek, where breakfast had been prepared for us. After the pack-horses and carriages had been sent over, we entered the boat, and bid a sorrowful farewell to Europe! On the opposite bank, a company of light infantry, together with a party of Cossacks, and a field-piece, were ready to escort us. The drums beat, and the whole cavalcade departed at a slow pace. Our convoy was very numerous; the leaving

Europe, the hardships which we had already experienced and overcome together, and still more the presence of our chief, bound us to each other by ties of the closest intimacy; and I appeal to all the members of the mission, whether we did not spend most agreeable days on the dreadful road from Mosdok to Tiflis. It is three days' march from the former place to Wladikaukas, and the daring spirit of the Tshetshenzes renders the passage most dangerous. There are two high mountain ridges; one situated before the fort of Konstantinoffskoy, the other immediately beyond it. The first opens into a glen at about fifteen wersts from Mosdok, which affords great facility for the commission of robberies. Those who have once effected the passage of this place in safety may congratulate themselves, for the Tshetshenzes never attack in the open field. An unfortunate officer, who had left Mosdok well mounted an hour after our departure, in the hope of overtaking us, was murdered on the road:

a proof, that although these villains be not seen, they are always lying in wait.

Other mountaineers, tired of a straggling life, have settled under the guns of our forts; and great numbers of them are already to be met with in the vicinity of Konstantinoffskoy and Elisawetinskaja.

The fortress of Wladikaukas is the key of the Caucasus. General Delpozo has taken great pains to build here and embellish the spot, and he has succeeded in converting it into an agreeable place of residence.

The river Terek, on the banks of which the fortress is situated, is very rapid, and although means have been found to establish a bridge over it, yet that is frequently washed away by the swell of the river.—We had not as yet seen any of the terrific scenery of the Caucasus, but we were assured by General Delpozo, who accompanied us from Georgefsk, that the country between Wladikaukas and Dariella surpassed any idea that we might have formed of it.

We left Wladikaukas on the 5th of October, and met with the first fall of snow; the thermometer might be at 5° Reaumur. The road was tolerably practicable during the first nine miles, and ran by the side of the Terek, which rushed towards us with a dreadful roar. The carriages suddenly stopped, which was unavoidable, for there stood in the way a granitic mountain of endless height, having an aperture, through which the Terek dashed its foaming torrents. To my astonishment the train soon moved on, and the first carriage disappeared; the others followed; it then came to my turn. Our situation cannot easily be conceived; we were on a narrow way, bordering on one side on a stupendous precipice filled by the Terek, whose noise drowns every syllable that is spoken, and on the other skirted by granitic masses, of which parts hung frequently over our heads. Mountains are piled upon mountains; at one time it requires fifty soldiers to draw the carriage up a steep, at another it rolls

down and pitches with the most dangerous velocity. The granitic masses ran closer and closer, and encircled us in a bottom, into which the rays of the sun have never penetrated; the humidity was intolerable; the rumbling sound of the carriages rolled like thunder through the hollow, and the voices of the drivers re-echoed like sounds from the grave. Whither, one felt tempted to ask, are these senseless people going? Another immense mountain stood in the way. Here the road, however, wound itself into a hollow; we had once more elbow-room, and the eye was thus continually deceived by apparent impossibilities. Of the sky nothing was seen but a little blue streak, indicating the direction of the road. New wonders now started to our view! an opening in the mountain discovered, on the summit of a rock, the little fortress of Larey, where our weary escort were relieved. Close to the fortress lies, buried in the ground, a small village, the residence of a prince named Dewlet, who was formerly a

regular highwayman, but now follows his old trade only in secret. He solicited the honour of a visit from the ambassador to his mole-hill, and regaled his Excellency with a princely banquet of — stinking mutton. The road continues to follow the windings of the Terek, and leaves the traveller astonished at the ingenuity and exertion by which it must have been made. The distance between Wladikaukas and Dariella is but short; we did not, however, reach the latter place till late in the evening, worn out with fatigue and hunger. A new sight was opened to us on the next morning! It was difficult to perceive from whence we had really come, and no road appeared by which we could continue our journey. The whole fort consists of two houses, which form such a contrast with the granitic masses that surround the basin, that they appear from a short distance like small specks. The bridge over the Terek is wonderfully constructed. The sun shines here only one hour and a half when it is in

the meridian. The garrison is relieved as frequently as possible, for to live there is almost as bad as to be buried alive. All these frightful objects neither impaired the courage nor depressed the cheerfulness of our party; they had no influence on our minds.

We left the dreary Dariella on horseback. The road wanders in a wonderful manner among the rocks, and eight miles from Dariella a frightful chasm is seen winding itself, as it were, into the clouds. Other apertures are seen branching into it, and towards the summit of the mountain it is no longer discernible by the eye. It is this gulf which regularly every seven years produces a great convulsion in the Caucasus.* How inconceivably tremendous must be the crash when solid masses of ice, detaching themselves by their weight from the summit of Mount Casebeck, and breaking rocks in their fall, roll

* On our return from Persia, that convulsion happened in September, exactly at the expiration of the seven years, as had been predicted.

down for the length of miles, hurling along with them, into the frightful gulf below, every thing which cannot withstand the shock. The course of the Terek is instantly suspended for several minutes, and the fish bounding in its dry bed may be seen from the fort of Dariella. The waters thus obstructed suddenly swell into a sea, or rather they fill the whole basin of the gulf, and breaking through the weakest place, rush with a dreadful noise, frequently taking a new direction, and sweeping along every thing they meet. The ice melts away in the course of years, and the blocks of granite remain scattered about the river, in heaps of various sizes, on which fir trees spring up, and create most magnificent scenery. We all stood admiring this enchanting spot, when our astonishment was, if possible, increased by the sight of an old convent, which appeared to have been built by some magical power on the summit of an immense rock. It is difficult now to conceive by what means such a situation was first made accessible. Towards mid-day

we arrived at General Casebeck's, a mountaineer who formerly rendered great services to Russia, and now keeps the peasantry in order, and is responsible for the security of the road. He gave us an Asiatic dinner, principally consisting of rice-porridge and mutton. Travellers generally pass the night at his house, but we immediately continued our journey to Kobi, where we arrived at a very late hour. On the road we saw several villages, if they can be said to deserve that name, and another object of wonder. We perceived a high mountain of granite, in which there was scarcely any opening. There, we were told, lived a hermit! Soon afterwards, we accordingly saw a figure crawl forth and commence a journey to the regions below. The hermit came down in safety, and advanced towards a cross standing in the road, where he usually receives alms. After many years of perseverance he has succeeded in hewing a spacious cell in the rock, where, as may well be imagined, he is out of the reach of interruption. Kobi is like-

wise a little fort, where only lately three small houses have been built. We found there a fire to warm us, but nothing more. Our baggage, and particularly the kitchen, were still far behind, and having since noon rode about thirteen wersts on horseback, decided symptoms of hunger had manifested themselves among us all. However cheerful we were on every occasion, and although the Ambassador took every possible pains to divert us, yet our spirits were very much depressed. We wandered silently about the house; it was soon midnight, and none of us would retire to rest,—when several voices out of doors suddenly exclaimed, "The kitchen is arrived! and so is our cook Nikita!" Although it was necessary first to make a fire in the kitchen, and some considerable time must elapse before any thing could be got ready, yet every body resumed his usual good-humour, and with the assistance of Colonel Wiljamiroff the whole party composed a complimentary song to the cook, which contained not only much point, but

was admirably adapted to the circumstances of the moment. Without acquainting the General with our design, we studied the song in a remote apartment, and after supper, for which Nikita, unconscious of the honour reserved for him, had prepared excellent cutlets, he was called in, and heard the song in presence of the General, who laughed heartily. The cook did not at first appear to comprehend the matter, but upon hearing his name loudly repeated in chorus, he was pleased, smiled, and bowed repeatedly.—The poor lady of the author of the *Lettres sur le Caucase et la Georgie*, whom I have the honour to know personally, did not spend such a happy hour at Kobi, where she was obliged to pass eight tedious days. It may perhaps not be altogether a matter of indifference to her to learn that General Delpozo is anxious that she should know, that three houses have been built at Kobi, and that she will at least not have to suffer in future so much as she formerly did from the want of accommodation.

On the 7th of October we left Kobi, and parted from General Delpozo, who had accompanied us from Georgefsk. The day was fine, and we marched cheerfully towards the frightful mountain of Rashawo. The sun had softened the snow, and the road, which had become slippery, still bordered on precipices. On account of the frequent heights, the carriages proceeded at a slow pace, and the men were frequently obliged to draw them up the steeps. At one time the mountains presented boundless prospects to our view, at others, closed the horizon.—The road from Mosdok to Tiflis is most dangerous and difficult; and he who has passed it in safety may esteem himself fortunate. After having ascended for some time, we perceived the cross on the Kestrowaja gora consecrated to the Redeemer and Saviour, but which still, in my opinion, does not occupy the most proper situation, for at that very place the road becomes most difficult, running down a steep of two wersts, and immediately climbing into the Gud gora, the ri-

val of Kestrowaja. The dangers of our march stared us so glaringly in the face, that we forgot the sublime scenery which surrounds the latter mountain, and were really glad to find the cross, to place ourselves, as it were, under its protection. The Ambassador knew how to draw from every untoward circumstance a fresh motive for being cheerfull, and chance afforded us an interesting opportunity to give a new stimulus to our minds. The day happened to be the anniversary of the battle of Leipzig, and we did not fail to celebrate it. Notwithstanding that we were up to the middle of our bodies in the snow, we crawled up to the cross on the summit of the mountain, taking with us a few bottles of wine, and there, in a boisterous wind that would have thrown us down had we not stuck so fast in the snow, we drank, with three huzzas, the health of the Emperor Alexander, then the allied armies, and afterwards the Ambassador. The prospect around from the top of the rock is very fine; but we were soon obliged to leave it,

and after a great deal of trouble, and by sliding down in the most ridiculous postures, we reached the bottom. After resting a while at the foot of the Gora, the work of climbing began. The road, which is scarcely broad enough to admit a carriage with two horses, is cut in the declivity of the rock; on the right it borders on a bottomless precipice, and on the left tremendous masses seem to threaten to disengage themselves from the mountain. The whole ridge is so much covered with rubbish and small stones, that it looks as if the Devil had been playing "odd or even" there. This is properly the place where the avalanches cause such dreadful havoc. But they only occur in the winter and spring, when the sun begins to operate. Nobody then ventures to pass this road, except during the night. Fortunately we have only learnt from others the extent of the horrible devastation which attends these awful phenomena. The station of Rushaour is only four wersts from the summit of Gud gora; and although the road

is not the most agreeable, yet when we contrasted it with what it had been, we crossed ourselves, and congratulated each other. After we had passed the night at Rushaour we set out in high spirits, for we had only one other obstacle to overcome,—the descent of the mountain of the same name. Although the road is tolerably safe, yet it is very steep, and many unfortunate persons have fallen down the precipice. At first, the eye sees nothing but an extensive field shrouded in a blue cloud; but as we descend, objects become more distinct; the chill of winter is gradually succeeded by a genial atmosphere; instead of naked rocks, verdant hills and trees greet the sight, warbling birds delight the ear, and the country expands into a most beautiful valley, watered by the fine river of the Aragua, and covered with cultivated fields, villages, and ruins of ancient castles. The industrious peasants are seen proceeding to their occupations; the wanderer thinks himself suddenly transported to a paradise, and he commiserates

the condition of the unfortunate inhabitants of the hellish region which he has left. Nature seems to wish to compensate the traveller for his sufferings; escorts are no longer necessary; he may pursue his journey in security; he is in Grusia! At the foot of the mountain, as the point where all obstacles cease, stands appropriately a simple monument to the memory of Colonel Daniloff, who converted the tremendous gulf of the Caucasus into a practicable road. In order fully to appreciate his work, one must have seen it with one's own eyes. The Aragua flows here in an opposite direction to the Terek; and we had therefore left the highest point of the Caucasus. We journeyed towards Passanaour through this beautiful valley upon a good and even road, enlivened by green thickets. The country between Ananour and Duchet, through which we passed on the following day, was rendered highly interesting to us by the beauty of its ever-varying scenery, but still it was not to be compared with the valley of the Aragua,

which would furnish an able painter with a rich harvest of sublime ideas. At Duchet we resided in the ancient palace of the Czar Heraclino. It is a tolerably spacious building, surrounded by a high wall, but has not, according to European notions, the least resemblance to a palace. The building consists of two stories, but is very low, and encircled by a gallery, into which open miserable little chambers, like monks' cells. Other buildings may have formerly ornamented the court; but it has now a poor appearance.—I found here the first specimen of Grusian architecture, if so it may be called. The habitations are sunk in the ground and have no roofs, so that one is perfectly unaware of being in a town or village until one actually stumbles upon houses.

On the 10th of October we continued our journey to Tiflis by way of Mshet. The day was fine, and we dismounted at the latter place, formerly the residence of the Czars, which appears now to be almost incredible. The Aragua here unites with the

Kura, (the Cyrus of the ancients,) which passes by Tiflis, and flows into the Caspian Sea. Neither the situation of Mshet nor its ruins afford any indication of its ancient greatness. If it be true that this city was built by a successor of Noah, who bore that name, it is undoubtedly the oldest in the world. At present it is inhabited only by a few hundred poor families. A beautiful church rises within the walls, which is said to have been formerly the palace of the Czars. What renders this church remarkable is, that it has stood during many centuries, and yet there is not a particle of iron about the whole building. Almost all the churches in Grusia are built in a similar manner in pure grey stone; and even the roofs are so skilfully joined with solid stone, that they seem to defy the effects of time. In a recess of the walls of the castle is a small chapel, where the holy Ninon, who in the fourth century introduced the Christian religion into Grusia, prayed for the welfare of her nation. She is said to have been an

interesting female, and to have won every heart by the sweetness of her manners. She converted the Czar Mician to Christianity, and his example was imitated by his subjects. Carrying in her hand a simple cross of wood, tied together with her own hair, she required no other external allurement to make proselytes to the divine faith.

At Mshet the Ambassador crossed the Kura alone on horseback, in order that he might proceed on the left bank unobserved to Tiflis, with the intention of surprising General Rtishtsheff, who at that time resided there as commander-in-chief: but the Mission followed the great road, and about a werst from Mshet crossed a bridge on the Kura, stated to have been built by Pompey. It is singular that on any subject relating to remote antiquity being started, men always expect to hear or find something remarkable. I think, however, I may safely say, that if we had not been made acquainted with the history of this bridge, we should have passed it without making any observ-

ation. As it was, every body thought to have discovered something curious about it. Some said that the construction had all the character of antiquity;—others found the span of the arch bold and airy;—the rest observed that the moderns no longer understood these matters. One of the party remarked, that two little towers, which I declare were shaped like our Eastlandish cheeses, were very pretty, and adapted to their purpose; — in short, every thing was admired, and thought interesting. I looked around for some time, endeavouring to find something remarkable also, and saw nothing but a Russian grenadier, who stood sentry on the bridge. Pompey would certainly have considered him a very great curiosity.

We proceeded along the right bank of the Kura, and reached Tiflis when it was dark. The Governor, General Stahl, had had the attention to give up his house to the Ambassador, and as it was sufficiently capacious, I had the good fortune to share

its comforts. I may well say *good fortune*, for Tiflis affords but wretched quarters. I was equally fortunate when the Ambassador subsequently took up his abode at the house of the commander-in-chief on the departure of General Rtishtsheff. General Stahl had the goodness to offer me an apartment in his house, a civility which cannot be sufficiently appreciated in a country like this. I daily enjoyed the society of my worthy host, and heard nothing of the complaints of my less fortunate companions, whose lodgings were sometimes too cold, sometimes too damp.

As my sole object is to describe the impressions made on my mind by the incidents of my journey, it would be ridiculous to enter into a description of Grusia, particularly as there exists already a number of very good books upon that subject. Every

body knows that it lies between the Euxine and the Caspian Seas, in the 40th degree of north latitude. Its powerful neighbours, the Turks and the Persians, have several times ravaged this unfortunate country with increased fury, on account of the Christian religion being professed in all Georgia. It had not escaped the penetration of its rulers, that, for that reason, they never could expect to enjoy repose, but must for ever bear the buffet of the adjoining states. An alliance with the Persians entailed upon them a war with the Turks; and when at peace with the latter, they were plundered by the former. The country was too weak to maintain its independence, or even neutrality. The general poverty and despair increased daily; a better expedient therefore could not have been devised, than that of becoming a dependence of the Russian empire; a measure which they have never repented. Notwithstanding war, failure of harvest, the plague, and internal troubles excited by avaricious princes,

the country is more affluent than it has been at any former period. Property is protected, taxation is milder, and bears more equitably upon all ranks ; the prince and the peasant are equal in the eye of the law ; the people bless Alexander. Under the Czar, every prince and every nobleman exercised unlimited power. He plundered and robbed his vassals, without being accountable to any authority. But that system is now at an end, although there are probably among the princes of the country some who regret the loss of their unlawful power, and dislike the present order of things. Formerly, one could not even leave the gates of Tiflis without falling into the hands of the Lesginers ; at present, there are but few places throughout Grusia where escorts are necessary. The roads were so insecure that trade could not flourish, and even the Czar plundered the merchants without mercy ; at present, there are very considerable commercial houses, who carry on a great trade with Persia and Astrachan.

The roads throughout the province were impracticable, and Tiflis itself was buried in mud. This city owes its present improved condition to General Jermoloff. He has, within a short period, built houses, paved streets, and laid out squares, in order to afford a free circulation of air through the narrow and filthy streets of the town. In short, any one who left Tiflis a year ago would not now know it again. When the inhabitants were at length made sensible that it was much more agreeable to live in houses than in mud-holes, when the novel luxury of having windows to look out of, afforded recreation to the poor incarcerated women, the rage of building suddenly spread with such rapidity, that not a workman could be found unemployed in Tiflis. The former house of the commander-in-chief, a ridiculous mixture of European and Asiatic architecture, has been pulled down, and replaced by a modern building with a fine piazza. The inhabitants at first stared greatly at this, but soon, nobody would be

satisfied without a piazza. If this rage should continue a few years, Tiflis will be a handsome town. The warm baths there are excellent; and if they were more conveniently arranged, one might feel tempted to pass the whole day there, in imitation of the inhabitants, who spend all Saturday in the baths. They carry pipes, wine, cheese, and guitars to the bathing rooms, and make themselves exceedingly happy throughout the day. The women do the same, only they bestow more attention on their persons: they dye their hair and eyebrows black, and their nails red. They paint their faces white and black, and then look like our dolls at a Christmas puppet-show. They walk out shrouded in black veils, and allow but little of their person to be seen except their black eye-brows, which they are rather fond of showing. Formerly, when any of the women saw a Russian coming at a distance, and they could not go out of his way on account of the narrowness of the streets, they used to stand with their faces

to the wall, until the dangerous man had passed; but waggish officers soon taught them to leave off this bad habit. When they met the ladies, they used to hold their handkerchiefs to their faces, and, like them, turn to the wall. Both parties then stood in this way for several minutes, laughing, and undecided which should give way to the other, until tired of the thing, they bowed and went on. So far from there being any such reserve at present on the part of the women, there is, on the contrary, some risk of being run over by them. The only diversion which the men allow their wives is that of breathing the fresh air every Sunday and holiday on the tops of the houses; and if several of them thus meet, they dance together to the sound of the tambourin. The motions of their arms are by no means amiss, but the length of their petticoats hides their steps. This, however, is no loss; for, so far from being able to dance, they can scarcely walk. The gait of a Grusian lady is really shocking. There

is another public amusement at which the women were allowed to assist as spectators. On all great festivals, nearly the whole population proceeded to a place out of the gates of the town, where two parties formed and took up different positions. The object of both was to endeavour to dislodge each other from their respective positions. It is natural that manœuvres of this sort should be accompanied by fighting and throwing stones; and they used to cut very valorously at each other with wooden swords. Although the little children did not venture into the midst of the fray, they threw stones from the rear against the opposite party, and received others in return; so that in the end, many were lamed, others received contusions, and some were left disabled on the field. However lively the feelings of maternal tenderness are in general, it was a point of honour held sacred by all the inhabitants, that no complaint should be made, even in those cases that proved fatal. As these games never ended without one or

two accidents of that nature, General Jermoloff found it was high time to interfere; and he accordingly would not allow them to be resumed, but upon condition that no person should dare to throw stones, or to use any other weapon than the wooden sword, which, although it might produce many bruises, yet could not occasion death. The people promised to observe this condition, but would not keep their word; for when one of these parties saw itself on the point of being driven from it's position, it would in the heat of the moment use every means within it's reach to maintain itself, and nothing was more natural under such circumstances than to have recourse to stones. As there seemed to be no other way of putting a stop to it, the games were prohibited altogether; and I am convinced, that many a mother secretly blesses this salutary measure. This diversion was called Tamasha; and the first noblemen of the country not unfrequently joined in it.

General Jermoloff, having deprived the people of this sanguinary amusement, offered them an entertainment of a nobler description, which occasioned at first considerable discontent. In the centre of the town there was an old cemetery, very venerable on account of it's ancient grave-stones: it occupied much space, and was surrounded on all sides by the filthiest lanes of the place. The General ordered that the walls should be pulled down, and the grave-stones returned to the families to which they belonged, in order that the ground might be levelled. Beautiful façades were added to the neighbouring houses; and the place would now do honour to any town in Europe. The embellishment which it has undergone combines the advantage of a supply of pure air. The square was solemnly opened one evening with music and fire-works, and all the females of the town witnessed the festivity from the adjoining houses. As the commander-in-chief intends to repeat this entertainment several

times during the week, I do not doubt but that the inhabitants, who are passionately fond of music, will soon forget their Tamasha. The able manner in which General Jermoloff in general administers every branch of the government confided to his care, authorises the hope that in a few years, Grusia will have realised the most sanguine expectations that are entertained of its general improvement. Circumstances have certainly contributed to throw many obstacles in the way of that improvement, but it must be allowed that little or nothing has hitherto been done for this province. The Emperor grants every thing that is required, and every commander-in-chief is invested with almost unlimited authority.

The climate has the extraordinary attribute of a sunshine that scarcely ever fails. The heat of summer is said to be intolerable, but the adjoining heights afford a cool retreat. North winds blow continually into the town of Tiflis and temper the burning atmosphere, but strangers are exposed by

them to the most dangerous colds. The inhabitants are insensible to their effect, because they have been accustomed from their infancy to live in a continual current of air; and on all sides of their houses there are doors and windows through which there is a constant draught. Throughout the whole winter, the snow lay only three weeks on the ground, and the cold never exceeded 8° Reaumur. In February the fields are again covered with grass, and the almond trees are in full bloom; rain generally comes on in March; the hot season follows, and scorches all the vegetation. The parched grass sends forth scorpions and tarantulas. The bite of these insects is seldom mortal, and never so if the injured part be immediately rubbed over with oil; but they cannot be seen crawling on the wall without exciting the most painful sensations, which are increased when they are heard during the night buzzing round the bed. It is dangerous on their account to stretch oneself on the cool refreshing grass, as we love to do in our own climate: in

short, they are the plague of the country.—The gardens here are quite irregular, and consist chiefly of vineyards. The wine is light, and resembles a good French *vin du pays*; but it is much to be lamented that the inhabitants will not learn to make casks. They find it more convenient to skin a hog, and after having rubbed the internal surface of the hide with naphtha, to fill it with wine, which they preserve and send away in this manner. The naphtha communicates such a disagreeable flavour to the wine, that it is at first disgusting to the taste; and much time and long habit are requisite to accustom the palate to it's use. In the province of Racheticon, where the best wine grows, the inhabitants keep it in large jars, and when tasted on the spot, it is said to be delightful; but they likewise send it to distant parts in hogs' skins, called Burduks. Fruit is very abundant; and good grapes are to be had nearly throughout the year.—The system of agriculture, and of farming in general, cannot fail to be considerably im-

proved and promoted by the colony of settlers from Wurtemberg, who, at the instance of the commander-in-chief, have been encouraged to repair to this country. They are already arrived; houses are building for them within a short distance from Tiflis; they receive cattle, seed corn, pecuniary assistance, in short every thing that they want; and I shall soon have to enjoy the satisfaction of seeing a German peasant carry good butter, cheese, and perhaps even beer, to the Tiflis market. Those good people said that there was a scarcity of food in Germany; that it stood written in the Revelation of St. John, that they must wander into another clime; they too were members of the empire, and could not bear so much misery. Be this as it may, they are honest, worthy people; their conduct is most exemplary: they acknowledge, with gratitude, what the government have done in their favour, and have firmly resolved to render themselves, by diligence and submission, worthy of the protection which

they have experienced. I am convinced that this little colony will produce a considerable effect on the morals of the Grusians. It would be very desirable.

The soil is remarkably rich, and only requires to be slightly harrowed. The seed will yield at the rate of thirty to one, and even more; but this liberality on the part of nature has contributed to render the people, to a certain degree, indolent. As the villages are nothing but a heap of mole-hills, the soldiers are ill quartered; their treatment, however, as far as depends on their hosts, is very good. Nobody had before thought of erecting barracks in Grusia; but the present commander-in-chief has supplied this want, and endeavoured to combine, with the healthy situation of these buildings, the advantage of being within reach of water-mills, which will save to the government a considerable annual expense, before incurred in grinding corn for the troops. The General was, indeed, obliged to begin by sending for

axes, shovels, hammers, &c. from Astrachan, for he could not here procure any articles of the kind. Although in this country the harvest be generally good, and corn is therefore in abundance, yet the government have been hitherto obliged to draw supplies from Astrachan, generally at an immense expense, and with great difficulty. That system is now at an end: corn is bought upon the spot; and a small portion only is imported. In the month of November the commander-in-chief visited the frontier, and the places of residence of the different Chans who are tributary to Russia. It is the custom among these chiefs to make considerable presents, of which it would be impossible to refuse the acceptance without giving them great offence. The General found a means of declining the customary presents, without offending any of the parties: he merely requested that no other presents might be offered to him than sheep, in which the riches of the Chans principally consist. His Excellency imme-

diately transferred these animals to the regiments, which were thus enabled to keep their own cattle; for the right of pasturage is here in common to all, and the animals find grass all the year round. The Chans vied with each other in making presents of sheep, so that the number presented amounted, at last, to more than 6000, all distributed among the troops. Thus the soldier has almost daily received rations of fresh meat, without diminishing the herd, as sheep multiply here very rapidly. The soldiers derive too an additional advantage from the skins.

Game is remarkably plentiful in this country. Hares, deer, wild goats, &c. are very numerous; pheasants are found in abundance. Among the beasts of prey there is a species of the jackall, which is called Tshekalka. It resembles the wolf, but is smaller, and has a much more ferocious appearance: its howl shakes the very soul; it is, besides, very bold, and sneaks during the night into the camp to steal the

soldiers' boots. When very hungry it enters church-yards, and digs up bodies recently buried. Hyænas are very numerous; but tigers are seldom heard of, although a singular circumstance procured us the sight of one. The soldiers frequently go out shooting, — a practice which the commanders of regiments have the less hesitation in allowing, as the men thus become more expert marksmen. It happened that two recruits, recently arrived from Russia, took a fancy to have a day's sport. After they had been out some time, they saw a large animal bounding towards them with great agility. One of their muskets missed fire; the other soldier had the presence of mind to allow the animal to approach quite close to them, and shot it so luckily in the forehead, that it fell dead at their feet. Unaware of the danger to which they had been exposed, the soldiers thought only of admiring the brilliant colours of the skin, and dragged home a tiger of enormous size. I had never seen such a beauti-

ful skin. The worthy recruit was not a little surprised to hear that he had performed an act of heroism. It must have been a tiger, driven by hunger from the neighbourhood of Bagdad.

Not long since a small caravan, which passed through Tiflis, afforded an honourable example of the zeal of the followers of Mahomet. The Caucasus contains a great number of small tribes, chiefly speaking different languages, and which are said to be the parent stock of European nations. Among these tribes there is one called Nagaizes, from amongst whom a party of about fifty men almost every year set out on a pilgrimage, through the deserts of Africa, to the tomb of Mahomet at Mecca. Having no geographical knowledge, it may easily be supposed that they do not always pursue the shortest road, and yet they generally reach their destination in about one hundred and fifty days. These people carry with them the whole of their little property, and it is to them a source of heavenly sa-

tisfaction to present it to the priests at Mecca; who, in return, reward them with white handkerchiefs, which every person who has visited the tomb afterwards wears round his head. They set a great value on these handkerchiefs, which they call *adgi*. I had some curiosity to enter into conversation with one of these men; but he knew nothing of the way by which he had gone, nor had any thing occurred to him which he conceived worthy of observation: all that I could learn was, that the heat is there so great, that in order to roast a piece of meat it is only necessary to place it on a stone, exposed to the rays of the sun.

All the members of the Embassy gradually assembled at Tiflis, and we passed our time in a pleasant manner. On New Year's day the Ambassador was agreeably surprised by a play, which was ably performed by some gentlemen of his suite. Several Grusians, who had never before witnessed any thing of the kind, laughed greatly at first; but they soon yawned, and

at last fell asleep. To complete the enumeration of our fashionable amusements I should add, that the same gentlemen gave a concert a few days after, at which we had the satisfaction of hearing a piano-forte from St. Petersburgh, that had traversed without injury the destructive roads of the Caucasus.

With a view to inform the Persian government of our arrival, the Councillor Masarowitsh, and M. de Ricard, were dispatched to Teheran; but our departure was still delayed, on account of the Ambassador's indisposition, until the 17th of April, 1817, on which day we left Tiflis.

It will, perhaps, be agreeable to the relatives and connections of the gentlemen who accompanied the Embassy to Persia, to be presented with a list of its members. Another motive, too, induces me to communicate this document to the public. The journals of Hamburgh asserted some time since, that the suite of General Jermoloff was mostly composed of French officers;

nay, they even had the audacity to mention these by name. But, on the part of the Mission, I may state what the list will prove, that we had not even a French cook.

LIST OF THE EMBASSY.

Lieutenant-General JERMOLOFF, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Knight of the Order of St. Alexander-Newsky, of the first class, and of St. Ann, of the first class; of the Order of Military Merit of Baden; of the Red Eagle, of the first class; of the Sun and Lion of Persia, of the first class; of St. George and St. Wladimir, of the second class; and of Maria Theresa of Austria, of the third class.

MM. NEGRI and SOKOLOFF, Privy Councillors, Councillors of Embassy.

Colonel JERMOLOFF, Marshal of the Embassy.

Councillor KUDABASHEFF, Secretary of the Embassy.

Councillor RICHLEFSKY, Commissary to the Embassy.

Councillor MASAROWITSH, attached to the Embassy.

Major KRAUSE, Treasurer of the Embassy.

Dr. MÜLLER, Physician to the Embassy.

M. de RICARD,
M. de BOROSDNA,
M. de JARZOFF,
Baron KORFF,
} Diplomatists attached to the Embassy.

Prince BEKOWITSH, and Prince BEBUTUFF, Captains

on the Staff; Lieutenant Popoff, and Lieutenant the Count Samoiloff, Aides-de-Camp to the Ambassador.

To the suite of the Embassy belonged Colonel Iwanoff; Captains Murawieff and Kotzebue; Lieutenants Rennenkampff, Babarikin, and Sherbinin; Ensigns Wojeikoff and Latshinoff.

Lieutenant Fedoroff, Superintendant of Police to the Embassy; M. Mashkoff, of the Academy, Painter to the Embassy; Lieutenants Staboush and Matwejeff, Field-jägers; a Kabardin Prince, with eight followers; M. Aufmord, Apothecary to the Embassy.

A Confessor.

Lieutenants Nasaroff, Shemirka, Madatoff, Meshirikoff, and Leonidseff, Interpreters to the Embassy; Mr. Secretary Parishky, Mâitre de Chapelle; the Titulary Councillor Letashinskoy, attached to the Court Cabinet; twelve Attendants, five Cooks, twenty-four Grenadiers, twenty-five regular Cossacks, and twenty irregulars; thirty Musicians, and the Domestics of the Gentlemen of the Embassy: making a total of about three hundred persons.

After having partaken of a splendid farewell dinner at Major-General Prince Kutusoff's, and proceeded to church to implore the Divine blessing on our journey, the embassy left Tiflis in the afternoon of the 17th of April, amidst the ringing of bells, and

accompanied by the whole population of the town. Dr. Müller, who had resided several years in Grusia, and had seen many a friend fall a victim to the plague, which he had only miraculously escaped himself, proposed to me to take a shorter road to Kodi; which, although it would lead us over a mountain difficult of access, yet would save us fifteen wersts. Dr. Pribel, and our worthy apothecary, Williams, accompanied us. We were repaid for the trouble of ascending the mountain by a fine view of the chain of the Caucasus, and the silvery course of the Kura. In the evening we arrived at our first halting place, Kodi, accompanied by Generals Stahl and Kutusoff, and several Grusian princes. The commencement of our journey was not altogether inviting; the kitchen arrived late, and we slept under the canopy of heaven. The ruins of Saganlug lie on the direct road from Tiflis, and are seen from Kodi. Saganlug is now inhabited by scorpions and tarantulas, and consists, like Kodi,

of a few miserable mud hovels, which belong to the Prince Arbelianoff! The Empress Catherine was graciously pleased to confer the title of prince upon every noble of the country; and the consequence is, that there are almost as many princes as peasants. Had the Empress been aware of their number, and left them only the original title, as expressed by the dialect of the country, Russia would be encumbered with a few thousand princes the less.

April the 18th, 1817. — With the exception of the Ambassador, who occasionally travelled in a small vehicle, on account of his wounded foot, nobody was allowed to take a carriage, for it was not precisely known whether the roads in Persia would admit of this mode of travelling: when we afterwards convinced ourselves of their being passable to carriages, it was too late to correct our error. This day's march was to Emir-Aivasli, situated on the river Hram. An oppressive sun, and swarms of insects, greeted us in the morning. In the middle

of this day's journey we crossed the river Alget, by a stone bridge, of great antiquity. The inhabitants neither know when nor by whom it was built; it was, probably, constructed by the Romans, during some period of their extended conquests. The Bartshalinish mountains lay before us, covered with snow; on the right, a castle of considerable magnitude, named Kolagivi, where the air is said to be so unhealthy, that both man and beast fall victims to its baneful influence. The passage of the Hram is not altogether free from danger; the water reached to the bellies of the horses; and it was found necessary to station a number of men across the ford, to assist us over, as a step on either side would have been attended with fatal consequences. Thank Heaven, no accident occurred; and we reached the encampment that was prepared for us. It consisted of Tartar cabins, which are semi-globular baskets, having a small opening in front, and covered with matting, to protect them from rain. Even

if a village had been close to us, we should have preferred to sleep in one of these kibitkas, as they are called, rather than in the execrably filthy houses of the Tartars. While we were at dinner, encamped under the shade of a tree, an inquisitive Tartar came to us, with a curious monkey, which performed the usual common tricks, but which, from its long grey hair and bare rump, appeared to me to be of a rare species.

The 19th. — General Stahl, the Civil Governor of Grusia, and General Kutusoff, who, together with several Grusian princes, had accompanied us thus far, left us, to return to Tiflis. Several villages, and ruins of ancient castles, embellished the fine views of this day's march. The road wanders through pleasant thickets, and leads us to a plain, skirted by a wood, where the Grusian army is encamped during summer, to avoid the burning heat of Tiflis. We also pitched our tents in the shade, near a murmuring stream; and in the mean while

the kitchen was laid out, and dinner was soon served. From this place the country became still more romantic: a road, leading to the copper mines, branches on the left, to shady mountains. We proceeded straight onwards to the bridge of Achkörpi, at the foot of the mountain of Achsebejuk, where our kibitkas were arranged for our reception. Lofty trees, throwing around an awful darkness, echoed back our voices, which re-echoed in multiplied reverberations throughout the valley.

The 20th. — If the fine views, which we saw yesterday, were calculated to inspire us with the highest delight, nature to-day also presented to us some of her most magical productions. On leaving the encampment, the road gradually wound itself up the great mountain of Achsebejuk. The thickness of the forest at first confines the eye to the objects that are immediately within its range; but the sombre hue clears up by degrees, and we enter a good broad

road, skirting a picturesque precipice, that expands into numerous valleys. Continuing to proceed thus for a while, we arrive at an avenue, beautifully formed by nature, ending on the summit of a height, from whence we could distinguish the mountains of Tiflis, the Caucasus, and all the places where we had previously pitched our tents. Numerous rivers wind in different directions, and then vanish in the boundless blue horizon. The Ambassador observed truly:— "We see a great extent of country, and yet it is nothing in comparison with the stupendous empire ruled by *one man*." The idea is truly great; and, in after ages, the existence of such an immense power will, perhaps, be looked upon as fabulous. We bade farewell to the Caucasus, the partition wall of our country, and left this heavenly place with feelings of regret. The road wanders through thickets, along a beautiful ridge of the mountain. At last we reached its highest summit: the forest here became thinner, and soon disappeared

altogether. Two mountains of granite suddenly rise in the way, leaving only a narrow passage, through which blows a continual and dreadful wind. The mountain itself has derived its name from this entrance to the abode of Satan, Achsebejuk, signifying, in the Tartar language, *great mouth*. Travellers should, however, take care how they make mouths here; the wind has such power, that men and horses can scarcely stagger through the passage. I never experienced a more violent gale, except in the sea of Japan, where we had a hurricane that snapped the rigging of our ship. In coming out of this way, the road descends very steep into the valley. The country is naked, very cold, and our night-quarters are bad.

The 21st. — Our way took us through a beautiful and extensive valley to the river Kamenaja, which has a terrific appearance. Its banks are lined by dark brown rocks of granite, rising perpendicularly to the height of forty fathoms. The descent to the bridge

is by a steep passage, encumbered with great masses of stone, so that it was found necessary to carry every article of our baggage; a manual operation which consumed four hours. This passage has been burst open by means of gunpowder. It has required much exertion to bring it even into its present condition, and any further improvement would be attended with great expense. A striking contrast to these rocks, which seem to defy the ravages of time, is afforded by the adjoining ruins of Lori, the ancient capital of Armenia minor, which formerly contained six thousand houses, gave an asylum to kings, and is said to have stood out during a siege of seven years. Thirty houses only now remain. In general there are numerous relics of Armenian greatness still extant: the nation has been scattered over the world; and its remains have united themselves to the Grusians, who treat them unmercifully. The situation of the country, and the different directions of the chains of mountains, produce

such local varieties of climate in Grusia, that it is not impossible to enjoy in one day the four seasons of the year. At night we were exposed to the cold of winter, travelled during the day in the warmth of summer, and met with the animating freshness of spring on reaching the foot of the mountain of Besabdal.

The 22d.—The road leads up the mountain. Below we left blooming trees, warbling birds, and verdant fields; but on approaching the summit nature gradually dies away, the trees are naked, the grass is yellow: patches of snow here and there cover the ground, and a piercing wind makes us shiver with cold. Thank Heaven we reach the summit, and are glad to descend, even by a dangerous path of several wersts, frequently crossing a rivulet. After travelling thus for an hour, we throw off our clokes, spring returns, and fragrant breezes greet us as we proceed. The river Bambak and its bridge soon become visible, and at a distance, the church of the little town of Karaklissa, sur-

rounded by mountains, covered with lofty fir trees. This town derived its name from Kara (black), and Klissa (church). The church is still extant.

Although this place lies in lat. 40°, the climate is the same as that of meridional Russia. It is celebrated for its fine trouts, and its honey. The troops have contrived to quarter themselves here so comfortably, that one forgets that it is a Tartar town. The accommodation which we enjoyed, rather than the fatigues of our journey, induced the Ambassador to rest here two days; for we could not expect to find similar quarters either in Grusia or in Persia.

The 25th.—After having recruited ourselves at Karaklissa, we marched on to the Armenian village of Bekanti. And here I should mention that a direct and nearer road runs across the mountains to Erivan; but as these were covered with much snow, and as no village is to be met with during a journey of three days, the Ambassador preferred the longer but better road through

Gumri. On leaving Karaklissa, it ranges among thickets along the river Bambak, which it crosses several times. About midway there is a large cave, which frequently affords shelter for the night to travellers, and even herds of cattle. The river flows near its entrance with a loud noise, which is awfully re-echoed in the cavern. How indeed should this spot be otherwise than awful! Traveller, arrest thy progress, and uncover thyself with reverence! Pass not unheeded the simple tomb of marble which records the name of a hero, whose exploits have ensured immortality to his memory! Yonder white cross marks the spot where his remains are interred.

In the year 1805, during the war between Russia and Persia, the commander-in-chief of Grusia, Prince Sizianoff, who was treacherously assassinated by the Persians, was besieging the fortress of Erivan, the numbers of whose garrison equalled those of the Russian army. The Persians, led on in person by the heir to the throne, came to

the relief of the place, and by a rapid movement surrounding the position of the Russians, besieged them in their turn. The situation of the latter was perhaps more critical than that of Prince Eugene, under the walls of Belgrade. Sizianoff made the necessary dispositions to defend himself: the Persians could make no impression on him, and he did not even alter his plan of attack. At last, however, he began to suffer from a scarcity of provisions ; and it became necessary to draw supplies from Karaklissa, which, although at the distance of 160 wersts, was his nearest depôt. As his whole army consisted only of a few thousand men, he could not weaken it by detaching a large body. He therefore selected the brave Colonel Montresor, and gave him two hundred grenadiers and a field-piece, with orders to fight his way to Karaklissa, and return to the army with provisions and reinforcements. Montresor passed the Persian line during the night, and by dawn of day had considerably got the start of the enemy ;

and although he was pursued by a strong body of Persians, amounting to *several thousand* men, yet he retreated with so much ability, that he repelled their attacks throughout the whole of that day. In the night he gained a small height, which he speedily intrenched with stones, so as to secure the position against surprise. Early on the following morning he fought his way through the Persians who had already surrounded him, and continued to effect his retreat; but on account of the continual skirmishing, he found it impossible to get beyond this unlucky cave. It was evening when he posted himself here, and he learned that his men had only one round of ammunition left. To add to his misfortunes, a Tartar deserted to the Persians in the night, and acquainted them with his desperate situation. The Persians, informed that they had only one discharge of musketry to receive, overwhelmed the little band of heroes on all sides, and soon cut them down. In the mean time, the firing

had been heard at Karaklissa, and a body of troops was dispatched to the assistance of their countrymen,—but they arrived too late. Thus fell Montresor, with the laurels of victory almost within his grasp! His own modest tomb is encircled by the graves of his brave companions in arms.

In the wars with the Persians most heroic exploits have been performed, which add lustre to the Russian name; and I know not why they should have been hitherto concealed from the world, while in every other country they would have been retailed, and dwelled upon to disgusting excess, by every newspaper. I esteem myself fortunate in being the first to record two heroic acts, which are confirmed by the testimony of the whole Grusian army, and the authors of which are still alive.

In the year 1805, Major (now Major-General) Lisanewitsh commanded a detachment of two hundred men and one gun. Attacked by an advanced body of ten thousand Persians under the command of Per-

culi-Chan, he maintained himself for several hours on the Araxes ; and keeping up a running fight during his retreat, safely reached the fortress of Shushain the evening. The Persians still call him *Delli Major*, the mad Major.

Another more desperate exploit was performed during the same year. Colonel Karegin commanded a detachment of six hundred men with a field piece, and Major Kotlerefsky was serving under his command. I am stating the facts as they were related to me by men of unquestionable veracity, and therefore I cannot do otherwise than ascribe the merit of this action exclusively to Major (now Major-General) Kotlerefsky, although he acted under Colonel Karegin's orders. This detachment was attacked by thirty thousand men, commanded by the heir to the throne, Abbas Mirza, in person. They fought during three days in the church-yard of the village of Askeran, deriving some protection from the tombs and high grave-stones. They had

no water, and were obliged to fight nightly for a supply. During the third night, Colonel Karegin, leaving behind a drummer and a few sentries, with orders to drum and give the challenge the whole night, effected the retreat of his detachment unobserved by the enemy; and after a forced march, took by a *coup de main* the fortress of Shachbulach, in possession of which he set the whole Persian army at defiance. At dawn of day the brave drummer and his comrades were cut to pieces.* To crown this enterprise, General Sizianoff,

* The narrative of this military exploit does not explain the particular share which Major Kotlerefsky had in it. Perhaps however the gallant author leaves it to be understood, that it was the Major who planned the enterprise, while the Colonel simply directed it's execution.—In this case, his praise of Kotlerefsky has not been measured by the respect which every soldier owes to the severe but necessary rules of military subordination. Allowing that the Major advised the enterprise, still Colonel Karegin was the responsible officer, alone accountable to his sovereign for the safety of the troops confided to his care; and as it cannot be denied that he alone would have incurred the blame attendant upon the failure of a

with twelve hundred men and a few guns, marched against Abbas Mirza, and totally defeated him. The king, who was on this side of the Araxes, at the head of a large army, retreated across the river with the utmost precipitation, and even destroyed the beautiful bridge of Huderapin, which still lies in ruins. In Persia, the name of Sizianoff is still used as the talisman of terror to children! It should, however, be remembered that the Persians had, properly speaking, no artillery at that period: they generally used small swivels, which were fixed on camels.

After having rested a while at the cave of the unfortunate Montresor, we continued our march, and having passed through the village of Amamli reached Bekanti in the evening, in the midst of a shower of rain. Here, too, upon an adjoining height, we saw a miserable fort, in which one hundred and fifty men with only one gun defended themselves

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rash enterprise, it seems singular that the author should studiously ascribe to the subordinate officer the whole merit of it's successful result.—*Translator.*

against a division of the enemy six thousand men strong, who not only could not injure the fort, but could not even annoy the inhabitants, who together with their cattle had taken refuge under it's walls. Notwithstanding it continued to rain, we preferred encamping in the open field, to sleeping in the mud hovels of the place, where we should have been eaten up by vermin.

The 26th.—A bleak and dreary valley leads to the fortress of Gumri, where the limits of the three countries of Russia, Turkey, and Persia join. From Karaklissa we saw no more trees, the want of which produces a tiresome sameness. From the road I observed the peasantry working in the fields: their ploughs are drawn with great difficulty by ten oxen, the ground here being hard. While at their work, they sing in a style of the most discordant harshness. Instead of harrowing in the mode practised in our own country, they merely drag over the ground a large branch of a tree, upon which a whole family is fre-

quently seen sitting at a time.—The Ambassador's indisposition, and the badness of the roads, have detained us here three days. It snows continually. The thermometer is 2° above the freezing point, and I am told that in a few days there will be an increase of 25° of temperature. The dwelling-houses of the inhabitants are wretched: they have converted the remains of an old church into a hay-shed. The climate is said to be healthier than that of any other place in Grusia. I have no wish to dispute the fact; but we were very glad to be saved the trouble of ascertaining it's correctness from any further personal experience.

The 29th.—We proceeded on our journey this day with very favourable weather. The road follows the course of the river Apartshai. On the left lay the high mountain of Alages, at the foot of which we perceived, in the distance, another pointed mountain, behind which the snowy summit of the celebrated Mount Ararat greeted us awhile, and then immediately disappeared. The

weather was very warm. At mid-way we halted, and pitched our tents on the banks of the river. Here the Kabardin prince shot a pelican, of enormous size. From carelessness in the first instance, and afterwards from wantonness, we set fire to the grass, which is never cut here; the whole field was soon in flames, and the smoke compelled us to shift our quarters. This is frequently done designedly in this country, as the grass grows much finer afterwards. Early in the afternoon we reached the quarters that had been prepared for us at the caravansaray of Shirpulu. Caravansarays are buildings which were formerly erected for the accommodation of travelling merchants: they are so capacious, that whole caravans, together with their horses and all their equipments, find shelter within their walls. They are all built of solid stone, and the architecture of many is of a handsome style. The caravansaray of Shirpulu is so old, that it is no longer remembered when it was built. Nor is it known

to what period should be assigned the date of the construction of the adjoining wonderful bridge, which expands in one arch over the Apartshai, whose banks rise here perpendicularly to the height of twenty fathoms. Unfortunately an earthquake has thrown down the centre of the arch, and the two mutilated ends are all that remain of it; but these fully show, that the arch must have been very high. In an adjoining church-yard we found grave-stones, the inscriptions on which referred back to more than ten centuries, and proved that the place must have been inhabited by Armenians. During the night we dug up a stone, upon which the name of Alexander was inscribed. Skulls and bones, of very large dimensions, were found, which had remained undisturbed above a thousand years. At ten wersts from this place lie the ruins of the city of Anna, the ancient capital of Armenia major, once the residence of a brilliant court. The sovereigns of Greece often resided here; and the fate

of whole nations has not unfrequently been decided within its walls! Now, only ten families live there, although its circumference exceeds eight wersts. Here and there broken remains of its walls are found: the ruins of numerous churches, and the vestiges of palaces, are still seen. Earthquakes have completed the work of destruction begun by the Persians.—Towards the evening we received the visit of a Turkish officer, who was sent by the Pashaw Ali, from the town of Kars, to compliment the Ambassador, and express his wishes that we might have a fortunate journey. As this Pashaw exercises the chief command of the frontier provinces, and, unlike his predecessors, enforces the strict maintenance of order, his officer was received by the Ambassador with great distinction, and dismissed with a costly present. To-morrow we enter the Persian territory. An officer has already been here, to ascertain precisely the number of persons and horses, in order to make preparations for us accordingly.

The 30th. — We left the river Apartshai far on our right: the road leads through a desolate country. This is the Persian frontier. On our way we met Asker-Chan, formerly ambassador at Paris, accompanied by several thousand horsemen, who came to welcome the Ambassador in the name of the King, and at the same time to announce that he was appointed memandar to the Embassy. A memandar is a functionary charged to receive an embassy, or a person of distinction, and to provide for their maintenance, and wants. The Persian government could, certainly, not show a greater mark of civility than that of appointing to the Russian Embassy a memandar who had himself filled the station of ambassador plenipotentiary. Asker-Chan is a man advanced in years: he long ago held the chief command of the Persian army. He had been well received at Paris by Napoleon. He speaks a few words of French. The Ambassador, out of respect for the advanced age and high stations

which Asker-Chan had filled, treated him with marked attention during the whole period of our stay in Persia; and would never consent that the Chan should exercise all those duties which are among the functions of a memandar. Those minor offices were performed by his nephew, Najar-Alibek, who had accompanied him to Paris, and who spoke a little more of the French language. Najar-Alibek won the affectionate regard of every member of the Embassy by his civility; and still more, by his uniform candour and sincerity: qualities which are truly rare among the Persians.

After the ceremony of mutually complimenting each other had been gone through, Asker-Chan's cavalry formed a circle round us, and we marched on. As we proceeded, the Persians performed, according to custom, various evolutions of cavalry; which consisted in skirmishing, pursuing, and attacking each other with the lance, and similar manœuvres, which, however, were not meant to divert us, but were intended as distinguished

honours.* In this manner we at last reached Taline, where the finest prospect opened to our view. The plain of the province of Erivan lay extended before us, bounded by the river Araxes: the two mountains of Ararat rose in the blue horizon, in colossal majesty. Youthful impressions ever exercise a lively influence on the imagination: the sight of Mount Ararat instantly recalled to our minds the history of Noah's ark resting on its summit, and of the animals

* The same custom exists in Morocco. Some years ago, a British ambassador to the Emperor of Morocco was received, on his progress to the imperial residence, with honours similar to those described by the author. On the boundary of every province the whole cavalry of the district was drawn out to receive His Excellency, who had repeatedly to undergo, under a burning sun, the task of appearing delighted with these irksome and even dangerous honours; for it seems that in Morocco the master of the ceremonies will not be satisfied with any thing short of the *excès d'honneur*; and that lies in the excess of skill on the part of the horsemen, which consists in galloping up close to the ambassadorial cavalcade, and stunning their ears by the discharge of pistols, accompanied by their own barbarous yells. — *Translator.*

walking forth in couples from this very point, to distribute themselves over the earth. With what fervour must he have returned thanks to God for his wonderful preservation, when he descended from this high mountain into the plain where he was to settle! A spot is still shown, where Noah is said to have planted the first vine. Times have altogether changed: after many fruitless attempts, it has been found impossible to ascend more than half way up the mountain: it is there covered with eternal snow, and tapers into the form of a sugar-loaf. On the summit there is a spot, which is said never to be covered with snow: some pious Christians maintain that it is the ark itself; others, less devout, assert that it is only the place on which the ark rested. We found Persian tents pitched at Taline; one of which was peculiarly splendid, and laid out with carpets. Refreshments were offered to the Ambassador and the mission assembled under its roof. These consisted of a quantity of unpalate-

able confectionary, and sherbet, a beverage composed of water, sugar, and acid; which, although it has not a bad taste, particularly in warm weather, when it is iced, yet cannot be compared to European lemonade. After many compliments on both sides our memandar wished us good night, and we slept for the first time on Persian ground. Taline is a Tartar village, with a castle built a thousand years ago, which has the following singular inscription on its wall: — "An unhappy father bequeaths this castle, as his favourite residence, to his happy son."

The 1st of May. — The weather was perceptibly warmer during the night than it had hitherto been. This day's march will take us into the plain. The Cossack General Sisajeff, and several other officers who had accompanied us thus far, returned to Gumri, and we proceeded without their protection on our journey. The day was very hot; and the ground being stony, our march, for several hours, was very

troublesome. Some great convulsions of nature must have formerly taken place here; for, as far as the eye can reach, the ground is so thickly strewed with large and small stones, that a horse has difficulty in crossing it. This dreary sight vanished after some time; and the plain of Erivan, together with Mount Ararat, offered themselves to our view with increasing interest. But how shall I describe the pleasing emotion which rose within us, on suddenly discovering, after a fatiguing journey in the land of the Moslems, the towers and walls of a splendid convent! It is the celebrated Jatshmiasin, the residence of the Armenian patriarchs,—a defenceless lamb among wolves. This sacred abode has, during the last fifteen hundred years, bid defiance to war, and its destructive consequences; nothing could shake it, nor, during this long period, divert its inhabitants for a single day from the pious occupation of prayer. The venerable patriarch Efremkam, surrounded by the priesthood, advanced in

person to meet the Ambassador, and taking his Excellency by the hand, led him, amidst the ringing of bells, and the acclamations of the Armenian people collected from the neighbourhood, to the residence which had been prepared for him.

We were all conducted to neat and clean apartments, such as we had long been deprived of, and shall not again meet with during the whole journey. At a splendid supper such wine was placed before us, as fully convinced me that old father Noah must have planted the first vineyard here. We learned with delight, that we were to remain a day at this place.

The convent of Jatshmiasin, which, in the Armenian language, signifies "Descent of the Son of God," is a splendid edifice. It consists of several courts, which are paved with flag-stones, and planted with handsome trees; and in some of which are basins of water, and fountains, affording cool and agreeable walks during the heat of the weather. The style of its

architecture is half European and half Asiatic; but it is good, and adapted to purposes of utility. The old church, in the centre of the convent, which has stood during fifteen hundred years, is of rare and beautiful architecture, combining grandeur with simplicity. It was built by St. Gregorius, the founder of the convent, on the spot where he witnessed the descent of the Holy Ghost. He is said to have several times attempted to ascend Mount Ararat, with a view to obtain a fragment of Noah's ark, but in vain; at last the Almighty conveyed to him, in a dream, the object of his desire, which is still preserved! Immense treasures have been collected here, from various parts of the world; for it is only at this place that an Armenian can purchase the holy ointment, as the patriarch in person, together with twelve bishops, must be present at its preparation, and it is in this convent alone, which contains three hundred priests, that that number of dignitaries can be found

collected together. The villages belonging to Jatshmiasin are deserving of notice, from their affluence. Indeed there would long since have been a flourishing town here, if the Persian government had not permitted the governor of the province of Erivan to plunder the convent at his pleasure. I feel convinced that the King, who has a great and honourable mind, is ignorant of the conduct of this monster, or he would, before now, have freed the poor inhabitants of the district from his capricious tyranny. This satrap has, during his government, amassed enormous wealth, which he is now too old to enjoy. He still, however, continues to plunder the people from habit, and the convent from real heartfelt satisfaction! He carries the system so far, that he compels the convent to pay a large sum, whenever he hears that a Christian traveller has passed the night there! What must not these people have suffered, on account of their hospitality to us! He is not ashamed to say, "These dogs at Jatsh-

miasin are glad when they can entertain a new Christian comer; they have the pleasure; I will have the money!" When he is at a loss to find a pretext for his almost daily exactions, he arranges a hunting party from Erivan, and visits the convent on his way. This honour must be dearly paid for. Many of his favourites, who can procure wine no where else, establish themselves there for weeks together, in order that they may riot in drunkenness, which their religion expressly forbids. If every want be not provided for, they threaten to make false reports to the governor, who, of course, would immediately levy pecuniary contributions! Thus the sanctuary of Armenian Christendom is continually exposed to the tyrannical exactions of a contemptible man, who is, at the same time, the most notorious drunkard in the province. The poor patriarch is much grieved to see the donations of pious Christians daily squandered away on such unworthy purposes. It has been already found necessary to en-

croach upon the ancient funds of the convent, to meet the current expenditure; but all its members are resolved to suffer with patience, and never, even if their resources should become exhausted, to abandon this sacred abode, whilst God grants them strength and fortitude. It was from a consideration of these circumstances, that on the return of the Embassy General Jermoloff decided to take another road, and not revisit Jatshmiasin.

The second day of our stay here, divine service was performed out of compliment to us: the patriarch, who was present on the occasion, made a very appropriate speech; and the ecclesiastics wept aloud for joy, to see amongst them so many brethren of their faith. We were all greatly affected; and the venerable patriarch was himself so much moved, that he could scarcely finish his address. The whole concluded with a prayer, in which the names of Alexander and Fet-Ali-Shah (the King of Persia) sounded rather singularly toge-

ther. When the service was over, we kissed the hands of St. Gregorius and Jacob ; also the spear which had pierced the body of our Saviour. Annexed to these sacred relics there was suspended, by a golden chain, a fragment of Noah's ark, of which small pieces could formerly be purchased, an indulgence which has now become a matter of great difficulty. The holy spear, of which the patriarch presented us all with impressions in wax, as tokens of remembrance, has been frequently carried to Grusia during the plague, where, of course, it performed miracles. On leaving the church, we were all presented, individually, to the patriarch, and permitted to kiss hands. A grand dinner followed, at which he was not present. Our band of music played: Christians and Moslems listened with delight, and every one was much pleased. We all remember with gratitude our reception at Jatshmiasin.

The 3d of May. — With the blessing of the patriarch we left the convent in the

afternoon, the bells tolling dolefully. On the road between Jatshmiasin and Erivan, Hassan-Chan, brother to the commander of the province, advanced at the head of four thousand cavalry, to meet the Ambassador. The greater part of the troops consisted of Kurdins, who are known to be a very brave people, serving in Persian pay. The General galloped up and down the front of the line. It was a singular sight. The horses were fine, and even richly equipped. The men, particularly the Kurdins, looked at a distance like disorderly old women: they stoop very much when on horseback; are covered with a quantity of silks of various hues; and their heads also are wrapped in a very awkward manner, in cloths of all colours, the ends of which are gaudily fringed. Under this ridiculous head-dress peeps forth a swarthy moustached face, compared to which, that of the famous Abellino was beauty itself. The whole line growled most frightfully, and their discordant noise was relieved by two small

kettle-drums, and several squeaking fifes. Their principal weapon is a lance of cane. Like the Persians, they pursued each other, and with great skill hit their adversaries in full gallop. Their muskets, pistols, and sabres, are made of extraordinarily fine iron; they can load with great quickness whilst at full speed, and frequently hit their mark. After the Ambassador had said much to Hassan-Chan in their praise, the troops formed a circle, and we went forward with the usual manœuvres. Not far from the river Sanga a dreadful shower overtook us, which was the more unwelcome, as we had our gala uniforms on, and intended to make a solemn entrance, with music, into Erivan. In crossing the Sanga, which, although not very broad, is deep and rapid, reaching even to the horses' bellies at the ford, I did not expect that we should get over without some accident; but the passage was happily effected by all, with the exception of a Persian, whose horse, through weakness, was instantly swept away, with his rider, by the torrent.

A corps of two thousand sarbases (regular infantry), together with six pieces of horse-artillery, were drawn out under the walls of the fortress of Erivan. On the approach of the Ambassador, the troops presented arms, the drums beat, and fifes played the English national air of "*God save the King!*" Welcome, in Persia, thou old acquaintance! In the middle of the line the sardar (commander-in-chief) of Erivan, Hussein-Kuli-Chan, advanced on horseback to meet us. This is the tyrant of Jatshmiasin. He was preceded by six running footmen, rather richly clothed, and by an officer, carrying on his shoulder a silver axe, the emblem of the sardar's power over life and death. A number of Persians, richly dressed, followed. He had on a shawl-dress; his turban also was formed of shawls; his dagger was ornamented with diamonds, and the trappings of his horse were of gold. The Ambassador offered him his hand; compliments were mutually exchanged; and the sardar took his leave, charging his brother

with the ceremony of conducting us further. The inhabitants were all surprised, that this haughty man should have condescended to advance out of the walls of the fortress, to meet any individual but the King himself. It was on that very account, however, that the Ambassador had firmly insisted upon his performance of that ceremony; and, as fate would have it, he was, perhaps for the first time in his life, thoroughly drenched with rain. In the mean time his brother conducted us to the house that had been prepared for the reception of the Ambassador, and discharges of artillery announced our arrival. The house consisted only of three apartments, and lodgings were allotted to us in the neighbourhood.

The houses in Persia are very slightly constructed, and generally consist of but a few rooms, mostly open towards the north; that is to say, instead of a wall there is a large window, with panes of variegated colours. It is shut during the night, but left open during

the day. In the rooms are a number of cornices and niches, which the poor people generally paint white, but the rich decorate with beautiful flowers and gilding. In every room there is a chimney-piece, generally opposite the window: the floor is of stone, and covered with carpets by the affluent, and mats by the poor. Such, in a few words, is the description of Persian houses. Their rooms are provided neither with chairs, tables, mirrors, nor any article of furniture whatever.—The Persians sit cross-legged on the ground: they leave their slippers at the doors of the apartments. Their meals are served upon trays; and if a gentleman does not retire for the night to his harem, a pillow is brought to him, and he sleeps on the same spot. To take a walk is considered highly ridiculous, and even vulgar. When the Persians see a person walk backwards and forwards, they conceive it must be on business, or they look at him with astonishment, and even think him out of his senses. According to

their notions, a man should be on horseback as soon as he passes the door of his house. At home he must sit with due gravity near the window, rest his left hand on his dagger, and pompously waving the right, be loudly calling out every quarter of an hour "Kallion*," to the gaping attendants, who stand on the outside the whole of the day. When he invites company many of these Kallions are brought in, some of which are ornamented with gold and even with diamonds: at intervals, confectionary prepared with mutton fat is offered to the guests, together with sherbet and fruit. The company assure the master of the house that he looks as red as his apples, as brilliant as the sun, as placid as the moon; and they take leave with the wish that the roses of happiness may ever bloom in the garden of his

* Kallion is the well-known glass-pipe, by which the smoke is passed through water, and cooled before it comes into the mouth. As it is the business of the attendants to light the Kallion, the finest flavour of the herb has all been extracted before the master receives it.—*Author.*

destiny. The host returns thanks with a friendly nod, laments that he must from that moment be unhappy, as they had accustomed his ear to the sweet tones of nightingales: he then resumes his former posture, yawns and waits for sunset, that he may perform his devotions, and be able to say, that he had smoked away another day. In the mean while the retiring guests look for their slippers in the anti-chamber, and courteously consume a quarter of an hour in deciding which shall go first: the most opulent, or the most distinguished, then generally yields condescendingly, and gracefully mounts his horse with a profusion of bows. Twenty or more of his idle attendants form a circle around him, take his horse by the bridle, and obsequiously lead the great man to his home. The higher ranks are generally actuated by a furious disposition to plunder, and are particularly apt to speak ill of each other, which is their principal source of recreation. They frequently assemble in large numbers, at the houses of

princes and other great men, where they stand in the courts gaping at their excellencies, and then return happy to their homes, often without having been honoured with the slightest notice by them. The towns in Persia consist of narrow lanes, of which the sides are walls with little doors in them. In the gardens, nothing is seen but espaliers of vines and fruit trees. It still continued to rain on the day after our arrival, an occurrence said to be unprecedented during this season of the year. With the exception of mutual messages of civility, nothing occurred this day between the Ambassador and the sardar.

We had fine weather on the third day. At ten o'clock in the morning the sardar came to visit the Ambassador. He seated himself rather awkwardly in a chair, smoked a good deal, said little, and scarcely moved his head when we were presented to him; but in defiance of the laws of Mahomet he eagerly drank the liqueurs that were offered to him. Indeed he makes no secret of his

love of spirituous liquors, and openly declares that he cannot live without them. After staying an hour he took his leave, inviting us all to dinner. Accordingly we went in state to the fortress where he resides. In the times of Chardin many people used to live there; but the sardar has driven them all away, and he is now there alone, surrounded by barracks. Our procession made a good display: the Cossacks led the way, then followed the band of music, next came the Ambassador, after him the suite, and another party of Cossacks brought up the rear. The people, who had never witnessed any thing of the kind, pressed upon us on all sides. The police-officers threw stones at them, and even beat them with sticks. There was one man in particular who always wanted to walk before the Ambassador, and who was provided with a bar of iron with which he unmercifully struck at the crowd. I really believe that these men would have killed many persons if the Ambassador had not out of pity requested them

to refrain from further violence. The populace were not allowed to follow us within the gates of the fortress; after passing through several narrow streets we dismounted at the entrance of the sardar's house, upon which his attendants advanced to meet us. Having gone through several courts which were lined with men under arms, we entered an open space, ornamented with a marble basin and fountains. The sardar advanced as far as the door, and conducted us to a spacious hall, the open side of which looked into this court, where the most distinguished persons in Erivan were assembled. Nobody was allowed to enter the hall, except the sardar's brother and our memandar. It was no slight mark of attention on the part of the sardar to have provided chairs for us, as we should have found it impossible to have laid down in the Persian fashion: he also sat in a chair. The walls were hung with small mirrors of different shapes, and the intervening spaces with flowers of various colours and little paint-

ings. We remarked, opposite the entrance, portraits of the king and of his son Abbas-Mirza, together with a picture representing a hunting-match, but so totally devoid of perspective that one figure runs over the other, and all appear to be dancing in the air. There were also some portraits of women, who looked as if their necks had been twisted. In general, the paintings are without light and shade, but the colours are remarkably brilliant and durable. Opposite the open side of the hall the building forms a large alcove, with a basin of white marble and fountains in it. This is likewise open, and looks into a most beautiful garden, which has been recently planted. The river Sanga flows close under the window: it's banks are lined with stately trees, and a handsome stone bridge of several arches leads to the other side, where the horizon is bounded by Mount Ararat. No house could be better arranged and adapted for a summer residence. A gentle current of air and the waters of the fountains agreeably tem-

per the heat; and even the sight of the snowy Ararat creates a sensation of coolness. Yet the summer is said to be so hot at Erivan, that the inhabitants retreat to the adjoining heights, and the sardar himself is obliged to retire to the camp. After we had all been seated, kallions were brought in, and a small table, covered with sherbet and confectionary, was placed before each of us. I have already mentioned that the latter of these articles is prepared with the fat of mutton; it may therefore be readily conceived with what appetite we tasted it, particularly before dinner. None of us could summon up resolution enough fairly to eat a particle of it, and it was therefore immediately carried away. A number of attendants then appeared with white table cloths of Indian manufacture, here and there ornamented with flowers. Appropriate sentences in the Persian language were printed in black letters on the corners; for instance: "All that is presented to you of fruit and food hereupon is good, and is of-

fered to you with good will." But there came in truth so much from this good will, that a thousand persons might fully have satisfied their appetite with it. I shall only mention the things on the table which stood opposite to Dr. Müller and myself; from these some idea may be formed of the other dishes. First a large pancake, which not only covered the whole table, but hung over it on all sides nearly half a yard deep. It is called Tshurek, and it serves the Persians both for bread and napkin; then the half of a sheep, the leg of an ox, two dishes filled with various roasted meats, five dishes of ragouts sprinkled with saffron two dishes of boiled rice, two of boiled fowls, two of roasted fowls, two roasted geese, two dishes of fish, two bowls of sour milk, a large quantity of sherbet, and four jars of wine; but with all these, there was neither knife, fork, nor spoon. One dish was piled upon another with such rapidity, that Dr. Müller and myself suddenly found ourselves stationed behind

a meat intrenchment which concealed all view of the court, and only allowed us a peep at our friends opposite, through the interstices of the multiplied dishes.

Through one of these openings I endeavoured to observe what the sardar was doing. With his left hand resting on his dagger, for the Persians never eat with the left hand, he gravely stretched out his right into a dish of greasy rice, of which he kneaded a small portion with three fingers, and conveyed it, with great address, into his mouth, seldom soiling either his beard or his moustaches. After repeating this operation several times, he broke a piece off the enormous pancake, and having wiped his fingers with it, swallowed it with an air of placid satisfaction. He, in the same manner, poked into a variety of dishes which he fancied; and, at last, seized a goblet of sherbet, and drinking it off, smiled around upon his wondering guests. Scarcely one of the party had tasted any of the dishes,

from the impossibility of getting at them; for not one of them could have been removed from the middle, without demolishing the structure of the whole. The signal for clearing the tables was at last given, and the attendants, as well as the gentlemen who were standing outside, and enviously looking on, must have considered us all to be persons of very great distinction; as it is the custom in Persia, on state occasions, that persons should abstain from indulging in the pleasures of the table, in proportion to the superiority of their rank. The removing of the dishes occasioned some curious scenes: the dish of ragouts could not be separated from the plate of sour cream, upon which it so conveniently reposed; the butter had entered into close alliance with the pancake; and the fish would not dissolve partnership with the roasted fowls. Force however succeeded, at last, in effecting the desired separation, and the eatables were delivered up to the persons waiting outside. It is the custom in Persia,

to give the remains of a feast to the attendants, or such persons as may happen to be in the way; often, also, to the gaping populace. Thus, in a great house, where they daily roast and cook treble the quantity of what is consumed by the whole of its inmates, the leavings are consigned to the hungry amateurs. Our intrenchments having been thus happily destroyed, we could once more breathe freely. The attendants presented water to us to wash our hands, but without napkins: the Persians allow their hands to dry; and we were obliged to wipe ours with our handkerchiefs. This operation had scarcely been completed, when, to our dismay, immense dishes were again brought in; but this time we came off more easily, for they consisted of fruits and confectionary; and, to our relief, only one was placed before each of us, otherwise, indeed, we should not have been able to see the dancers, who had just entered the hall, and ranged themselves by the door. Their music consisted of a guitar, a sort of

violin, of three strings, two tambourines, and a singer. The latter, with frightful grimaces, strained his throat, apparently in strong convulsions; fortunately for us, however, he frequently covered his face, according to the custom of the country, with a piece of paper, and spared us the sight of his hideous grimaces. The musicians did not play out of tune; but still the effect of the whole sounded not unlike a concert of cats. Three handsome boys, clothed in long garments, decorated with silk ribbons of different colours, were so inspired by this discordant music, and the screams of the singer, that they began dancing, and throwing themselves into various attitudes. They had small metal castanets, which they struck in time with the dance. I believe that two of these youths were meant to represent females, because their motions were slower, and more modest; but the third boy tumbled about most furiously, turning alternately to each of the others. The most ludicrous part of the entertainment, how-

ever, followed, when the music suddenly rose to a loud pitch; the singer screamed without mercy, and the three boys tumbled, in somersets, to the extremity of the hall; where two of them remained in a graceful attitude, while the third stood upon his head, showing his pantaloons and naked feet. There was one particular feat, which the dancers performed with great address: they turned several times in the air, without touching the ground with their hands or feet. With our ears well filled, and our stomachs empty, we at last broke up: the Ambassador took leave of his liberal host, and the whole party returned home in the same state — to dinner!

As the Ambassador could not, with convenience, return the sardar's civility in the house occupied by His Excellency, he requested the use of his garden, which was granted with great readiness. We sent the musicians and our culinary establishment on before us; and, at ten o'clock in the morning, the Embassy proceeded to the garden, where

the sardar was waiting for us in a pavilion. Our road took us along the walls of the fortress, and over the river Sanga: the bridge, and adjoining country, afforded a beautiful prospect. On the other side of the Sanga we immediately entered a garden, recently laid out, of which the principal alley leads to the pavilion, from whence the fortress and the sardar's house appear to great advantage. The alley leads on to a height, upon which the Russians had, during the war, established a battery, but had had the politeness to respect the house of the sardar. The pavilion is built in the Asiatic style, and is very pretty and appropriate. It is surrounded by fountains; and there is inside also a marble basin, with a *jet d'eau*, which strikes little bells, and thus produces gentle sounds, which are pleasing to the ear of the sardar. The building is high, and consists of several stories, which have all an aperture in the middle, so that every room communicates with the principal apartment. The internal partitions are

painted with considerable taste, and the divisions outside are marked by galleries of variegated colours. This place already affords a delightful residence in summer; and, as the cultivation undoubtedly shows European skill, nothing is wanting to render it, in a few years, a heavenly retreat. Our band performed, and the Persians drank chocolate and liqueurs: they ate with great appetite the ices, of which they do not well understand the preparation. The dancers of yesterday again presented themselves, and begged permission to dance to the Russian music, with which they were greatly pleased.* The wine, at dinner, was good, and the Persians quaffed it off, as well as the liqueurs, in immense quantities. Indeed

* Some years ago the general commanding an Austrian corps, stationed on the Ottoman frontier, was invited to dinner by the governor of the adjoining Turkish province. Music formed part of the entertainment; that is to say, all the drums, tambourines, trumpets, fifes, cymbals, and other clangorous instruments which had been scraped together, performed a concert similar to that described by the author. Upon taking leave, the

we met with several instances, where men drank off a bottle of rum at once, without appearing to suffer any inconvenience from it. Two of these valiant topers sat in a recess of the pavilion: one of them was the sardar's physician, and the other a colonel, in whose house the Ambassador resided. It was highly ludicrous to hear the physician endeavour to prove that Mahomet had been a fool to forbid wine. His master, he said, was of the same opinion; and he could boast, as a physician, that he had found an universal medicine, namely spirits, which he took care to recommend to all his patients. The colonel confirmed all

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general invited the pashaw to come to the Austrian camp on the following day; and he hinted to the Turk, that his musical taste should be gratified. The pashaw came according to appointment, and after dinner a select band performed some of the *chefs d'œuvres* of the German masters. "Well," said the general, "has your excellency been gratified?" "Ha!" said the pashaw, "it is well: but your people play from books; now ours play any thing."—*Translator.*

this with a good-natured, and often involuntary nod; and he observed, that this universal medicine had obtained such general approbation, that Lafosse, an European physician, who resided here, had lost all his practice. Dr. Sangrado would certainly not make his fortune at Erivan. The sardar himself looked out of a window, and smiled: his gravity was gone; and he requested the Ambassador to leave him a few bottles of liqueurs and rum. He has sixty wives. The guests parted, all highly pleased; and our departure was fixed for the day following.

I subjoin such particulars as I was able to learn relating to this place. Erivan is an Armenian word, which signifies "he that appeared, or that was seen," which refers to the tradition, that this was the first place seen by Noah on descending from Ararat. The mountain is at a distance of ten wersts. The town is not upon the whole without some handsome situations; but the buildings are

little seen, being mostly situated behind the gardens. Two rivers flow in the vicinity; one, the Sanga, the other is called Kverbulak (twenty arms). The first issues from the lake of Erivan *, traverses the greater part of Armenia, and unites itself with the Araxes not far from the Caspian sea. The history of Persia is silent as to the origin of the town; and on that account the inhabitants presume to assert that it is the most ancient city in the world, and that Noah settled here after the deluge. In the year 1582, the Turks conquered Erivan, and during the reign of Murad or Amurad III. built there a fortress, which is still standing, and lies within cannon-shot of the place. In the year

* The lake of Erivan lies at a distance of three days' march from the town of that name. The Persians call it Deria Shevin (the sweet sea), because the water is said to have a sweet taste. It's circumference extends to one hundred and fifty wersts. It contains trout and carp in abundance, of a fine flavor. Chardin says that he could not, during his stay in Persia, find this lake in any map. — *By the Author.*

1604 it was reconquered by the Persians, under the Shah Abbas, who enlarged the fortifications. Eleven years afterwards, it's earthen walls resisted during four months the attacks of the Turks, who were obliged to abandon the siege. After the death of Abbas the Great, Erivan was again besieged and conquered by the Turks; but it was afterwards wrested from them by Sosi, in the year 1635, during the reign of Sultan Amurad IV., and the whole garrison was put to the sword. It fell again into the hands of the Turks in 1721, during the troubles excited by the house of Sosi; but the celebrated Shah Nadir reconquered it in the year 1734. The Czar Heraclius took advantage of the troubles which distracted Persia after the death of Tamassa, and captured Erivan; but lost it soon afterwards, together with his whole empire; and finally the Russians, under Count Gudowitsch, attempted to take the place by storm, but were defeated.

The name of Ararat recalls to my mind

View of the Mountains of Ararat taken from the gardens of the Sardar of Erivan

the little prints of my catechism, which used to attract the attention of my early youth. This mountain, whose geographical dimensions were not overcorrectly delineated in those prints, and upon whose summit rested Noah's ark twice the size of Ararat itself, now stands before me in all it's magnificence. It rises behind the Araxes, which winds along it's base, in two points, of which one is less considerable than the other, and is therefore called here Ararat Sadach, son of Ararat. Properly speaking, it is situated in Armenia, near the ridge of Salt mountains, where the Kurds form their encampments. From it's middle upwards it is entirely covered with snow, and in general shrouded in clouds. Many fabulous stories are told of this mountain; but it is certain that it's summit cannot be reached, for this very obvious reason, — that it runs perfectly steep from the middle to the point, and is covered with ice. An opulent Turkish pashaw, fond of travelling, had the curiosity to attempt it's ascent, but

as soon as he had reached the middle, he was compelled by the violence of the cold, and of the wind, to give up his intention.

Three years ago an immense mass of snow detached itself; and the inhabitants of an adjoining village pretended that a plank belonging to Noah's ark had been found in the snow. It really would not be amiss if wood were oftener to come down from the mountain, for it has become rather dear in the valley. Ararat affords a retreat to a number of wild beasts, and serpents of enormous size. A convent is situated at it's foot, called Arokilvank, an Armenian word, which signifies "convent of the apostles." The Armenian people consider the place as sacred, and assert that Noah had, upon that very spot, offered up thanks to God, and built his first dwelling.

The 7th May. — I have already observed, that from the day when the Embassy entered the Persian territory, their conveyance and daily maintenance were defrayed at the sole expense of the king. Saddle-horses

were provided for us, and our baggage was forwarded on mules and camels : these were all decked with bells, which occasioned a frightful noise. The weight which one of these mules carries is astonishing; nor is the steady, rapid pace at which they move less surprising. Camels, on the contrary, proceed with a true philosophical *sang-froid*, which nothing in the world can disturb. In loading and unloading their burdens, they kneel down on the first summons of the driver, with outrageous cries indeed, but never with resistance. They possess the singular instinct of feeling how much they are capable of carrying, and they intimate that they have been sufficiently loaded, by rising without being called upon to do so. There is perhaps no animal which may be fed cheaper and easier than the camel: they graze on wastes, where scarcely any grass is seen, and thrive notwithstanding; but to ride on these animals is absolute torture, on account of the action of their hunches. As all the purposes of convey-

ance in Persia are effected by horses, asses, and camels, roads, properly speaking, do not exist; and there are even many Persians who never saw a wheel. Travellers, therefore, must follow the direction of the narrow paths that have been trod down in the grass; but in stony tracts, there is scarcely any cue of that kind, and guides are necessary to point out the way. The Persians generally travel on horseback, and ladies only use a kind of vehicle called a portable caravan, which is not altogether very convenient. It consists of wooden frames, which form something similar to a large cage, resting upon two long shafts, projecting sufficiently in front and behind to admit a couple of mules, which carry it very well. The whole apparatus is commonly covered with red cloth, cut out at the places where the mules stand. These machines are so low, that one can only sit in them in the Persian fashion. Several of them were allotted to our sick, who found it necessary to lie stretched out. We were

at first not altogether disposed to trust ourselves to the Persian horses; but, upon trying them, we found them as docile as lambs, and admirably adapted for travelling, on account of their pleasant ambling pace. A horse that has not that pace is sold in Persia for half price.

This day's march was to the village of Dugin, in the vicinity of which we saw the magnificent valley of the province of Erivan, watered by the Araxes. Numerous villages lie scattered about. Almost every village in Persia has the appearance of a little fortress, being entirely surrounded by high walls, whose corners form towers, with embrasures. This voluntary incarceration may have derived its origin from the frequent wars and revolutions of the Persians; but in general it may be ascribed to their jealousy, a passion of which they are susceptible to the wildest extent. After crossing the little river Garnitshai, but without seeing the black marble pillars which Chardin describes a hundred years ago, we reached

the encampment that had been formed for us close to the village. This day we approached nearer to Ararat. We took our evening's repast in the open air; and the snowy summit of the mountain continued long to be richly illumined by the setting sun.

The 8th. — On our left lay a ridge of mountains which regulates the direction of the road, and, further on, bounds its limits: on our right, the Araxes steadily remained in sight. We observed, on the banks of the river, the ruins of a convent, where the holy Gregorius, the founder of Jatshmiasin, sat many years in a grave, in order that he might leave the world perfectly free from sin. The Armenians perform pilgrimages to this place from distant parts; and on approaching the grave, recover, as they conceive, from dangerous diseases. The country is intersected by numberless canals, which irrigate the rice and cotton fields; but they emit disagreeable vapours, which produce headache. On entering the village of Dawalu, where this night's quarters had

been fixed, we were met by many of it's inhabitants, whom curiosity to see us had collected together. Several women among them appeared so dirty, ugly, and ill-dressed, that they filled us with absolute disgust. We received a visit in our encampment from an extraordinary fellow, whom we at first took for a madman; but he turned out to be a dervish, who studied eccentricity in his dress: a sheep's skin barely covered his body, his hands and feet were naked; a wreath of flowers decked his head; in his right hand he held a pike, in his left a kettle: he uttered dreadful cries, in which the name of Ali continually occurred, and we were told that he was praying for our happiness. Although he did not beg alms, a conduct very praiseworthy in Persia, we threw some money into his kettle, which he took without thanking us. There are several orders of dervishes: this man belonged to one whose members pass their whole lives in the open air.

The 9th. — The country is no longer pleasant: we passed between two heights, which form a narrow passage, and shut out a prospect of the valley which we had just left. Several inconsiderable villages lay at a short distance from the road: the heat was very tolerable; yet we were very glad to find our tents pitched in the shade of apricot trees, near the village of Nurashin. In Europe, people fancy Persia to be a paradise, and the Persians persuade themselves that it is such; but although it be now spring, we neither find the flowers, the beautiful verdant fields, nor that general heavenly aspect of reviving nature, which are the attributes of this season in northern climates. The mountains around are naked, the fields yellow, and trees scarce.

The 10th. — Immediately on leaving Nurashin, we crossed at least ten different arms of the river Apartshai, which forms the boundary of the province of Erivan, and the possessions of Nakatshevan. When the river is full, the passage is highly dan-

gerous. The road winds along heights, which form beautiful scenery towards the Araxes. The town of Hoye is situated here, distinguished by it's being the favourite summer residence of the heir to the throne. In the distance a rock of singular shape rises before us, called the Serpents' Mountain, because serpents are said to abound there. Not far from this mountain the road turns into the province of Carabach. We found, in our way, a beautiful spring of clear water, such as we did not meet with again. There is generally a scarcity of good water in the country: it is every where very muddy, and has a disagreeable taste of clay. We had the misfortune to lose at this time one of our servants, who died in the night of apoplexy. His body was buried deep in the ground, and covered with large stones; but we found every thing destroyed on our return, for the Moslems never allow the body of a Christian to rest in peace. This case made a deep impression on us all: when we are far from our country,

the death of a companion cannot fail to excite painful alarm.

The 11th. — The country, on this side of the last mountain-ridge, from which the road, as it were, precipitates itself into the town of Nakatshevan, is so desolate that it defies the power of description. Not a house nor a blade of grass to relieve the weary eye! Naked mountains of marl, mostly split by the ardent rays of the sun, and intersecting each other in various directions, encircle the traveller in dreariness. The country surrounding Nakatshevan is equally desolate, but the sight of trees about the town once more gladdens the eye. The Chan of the place, a blind old man, advanced to meet us at the head of several thousand horsemen. The streets and houses through which the Embassy passed were all occupied by armed men, in honor of the Ambassador. Poor old Kambarei-Chan, who is, perhaps, the best man of his people, was formerly proprietor of Nakatshevan. Having had the misfortune to displease the

government, he incurred the punishment, frequent in Persia, of losing his sight. Deprived at the same time of his property, he and his family lived, for twenty years, in a state of the most wretched poverty; and it is only two months since, that the government, from motives of pity, and yielding to the loud solicitations of his people, who were sadly oppressed during his disgrace, consented to appoint him to the government of his patrimony. The Ambassador expressed his concern that he should, on his account, have thought it necessary to appear in public, and he showed him generally every attention to which his infirmities and his misfortunes entitled him. We were all quartered in a large new house which had been emptied on our account. My room is an apartment of the seraglio. The good accommodation allotted to us, as well as the desire of repose, which we have not enjoyed since our departure from Erivan, have determined the Ambassador to rest here a whole day. Our residence, like

all the houses of the satraps, consists of numberless little courts and rooms, all connected by small narrow passages. Each room has only one entrance. In the seraglio separate apartments are allotted to each of the principal women, and many of the other females live together. These houses have only one entrance from the street, and the first court is inhabited by the head of the family. The walls are very high, and so broad that men and dogs can conveniently walk on them to guard the jewels within.

The town was formerly captured by the Russian general Nebolsin; but this is the utmost limit to which the Russians extended their conquests in Persia. The records of Armenian history which are preserved in the convent of Jatshamiasin assert that Nakatshevan is the ancient celebrated Artaksat, and one of the oldest cities of Armenia. In the days of it's former prosperity, it is said to have contained thirty thousand houses, but scarcely one-thirtieth

part of that number is now standing. Every corner in this country claims the honor of having been settled upon by Noah; and the Armenians pretend that he also founded this city. The little river of Nakatshevan, which forms a waterfall, divides the town in two parts. That which lies on the western side was, at an earlier period, enclosed in a fortress, which the Russians had, in several wars, repeatedly destroyed. The only objects worthy of attention are a very high tower, not square, bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions, and an adjoining gate now in ruins, but of which two pillars of peculiar workmanship are still standing. They are said to be monuments of the famous Tamerlane. The Ambassador proceeded on a visit to Kambarei-Chan, to thank him for his kind hospitality.

The 13th. — This day we left the town, accompanied by several Persians of distinction. The country around is very desolate: the mountains of marl reflect a

yellow hue, which fatigues the eye; and nothing is seen to diversify the sameness of the landscape, but the summit of the distant Serpents' Mountain. A few wersts from the town we waded through the river Nakatshevan, which must formerly have had a considerably wider bed, as would appear by the ruins of a magnificent bridge, which, singularly enough, forms an angle against the stream. It formerly rested upon twelve large arches, of which six only are now visible. In the afternoon we reached the Araxes*, which had faithfully accompanied us from Erivan, within the distance of a mile, and now described an incurvation, which it was necessary that we should pass. Its extreme rapidity rendered it no very agreeable expedition to us, to cross upon a number of inflated hogs' skins bound together; yet, with the exception of

* Strabo says, that the Araxes flows directly into the Caspian. At present it unites its waters with the Kura, at a great distance from the sea; but its old bed may still be distinctly seen. — *Author.*

four new wheels, which were lost from carelessness, men and baggage safely reached the other side. This river has probably derived its name from Mount Ararat, where it rises; its bridges no longer exist. There are two facts relating to this river, which appear to me worthy of remark. It will scarcely be believed in Europe, that the Araxes, which lies here in 39° lat. has been several times frozen during winter to such a degree, that troops and artillery have marched over it without any danger. The other curious fact is, that the plague, which rages with such violence in the neighbouring Ottoman possessions, has never extended its ravages beyond the line of the Araxes. It is necessary that I should add, that the Persian government never adopt the slightest precautionary measure against that dreadful malady. Notwithstanding the continual trade with Turkey, the plague never now makes its appearance; and it has rarely, for many years past, extended to the Araxes.

A few wersts from hence lie the ruins of the celebrated ancient city of Julfa, which was the chief seat of commerce in Armenia. The Shah Abbas, with a view suddenly to convert Ispahan into a flourishing town, transferred all the inhabitants of Julfa to the former place, where their descendants inhabit a quarter that bears the name of their aboriginal city. The latter is now occupied by only twenty-four Armenian families.

The 14th. — We had this day a long march of six agatshes (about twenty-four English miles,) which, however, was much alleviated by the disappearance of the naked marl hills. At a few wersts from the Araxes, beyond the villages of Alamdar and Gerger, we entered a narrow valley, surrounded by immense granitic rocks; the road winds very pleasantly through the different glens, forming a constant succession of new landscapes; it perceptibly ascends the mountain, the length of a German mile. Not far distant from our night's quarters,

which were established close to an old caravansaray, lies, on a steep inaccessible height, a large village, whose inhabitants are often in negociation with the government. The latter are obliged to pay them sums of money, in order to induce them to desist from plundering passengers. The gate of the caravansaray is decorated with blue bas-reliefs.

The 15th. — We have at length entirely lost sight of Mount Ararat. We descended to-day, though imperceptibly, as much as we had ascended yesterday. The prospect of the country was extremely confined, until we reached a mill on the rivulet Gulus; where suddenly a heavenly landscape expanded before us, enlivened by more than forty villages, and the distant town of Maranda, all surrounded by beautiful trees. The governor of Maranda, Nasar-Ali-Chan, advanced to meet the Ambassador with a body of cavalry, as usual, and offered to His Excellency the use of his own house. Although not yet finished, the

apartments allotted to the Ambassador exhibited proofs of considerable taste and opulence. Maranda, in general, surpasses all the towns and villages which we have hitherto seen: the walls, facing the streets, are uniform and cleanly; some of these have even avenues of trees, which can alone dispel the inanimate and melancholy dulness of a Persian town. An unimportant rivulet, called Selu-lu, flows through the place. The Persians show great skill in hydraulic contrivances; and every inhabitant of Maranda is enabled by machinery to water his garden from this rivulet. The parching heat, the paucity of rivers, and the scarcity of rain in general, in this country, must have contributed to render the Persians, from the earliest times, acquainted with the practical principles of hydraulics. Every peasant, wherever he may be settled, possesses the skill of discovering a spring at the distance of several miles; and he can, in the most simple mode, lead its water to his grounds, and render it always available, by

using only so much of it as they require. It is said, that in the hottest part of summer cochineal is gathered during eight days at Maranda, although in very small quantities. Before that period it does not attain sufficient maturity ; and, at it's expiration, the insect eats through the leaf, it's cradle, and perishes. The Persian name of cochineal is *kermis*. Of Maranda, it is likewise asserted by the Armenians, that Noah's immediate descendants settled there, and even that it is the place of his wife's interment. Who could have neglected the sight of such a hallowed ground? Curiosity led us to the spot, and we found that the Moslems had built, on the place where Noah's wife is reported to have been buried, a chapel, with bare walls, which are not so cleanly as the religion of Mahomet prescribes. When the chapel was finished, nobody, however, would undertake to point out the actual spot where the body lay. A miracle solved their doubts. Thirty-eight years ago, during an earthquake,

the ground opened, and two Mollahs (Moslem priests), of whom we saw one in the chapel, together with several inhabitants, witnessed the sudden appearance of a large tomb of stone, which, however, soon vanished in the opening. From that time, true believers have been convinced that Noah's wife lies interred there; although it would seem, that the honour of actual sepulture is a point at issue between her and Noah's mother, as Maranda signifies, in the Armenian language, the " mother lies here." This grave, perhaps, contributed to induce the Ambassador to rest here a day.

The 17th. — After passing a small fort, which lies almost in Maranda, we ascended a high mountain, from which we had another fine view of the valley: and we could even distinguish, in the distant horizon, the place where we rested on the 14th. This mountain is called Meshau: it led us, after several hours' march, into a beautiful valley, watered by the river Sagra. Medicinal herbs, of extraordinary efficacy, are said to

grow here. After passing through the villages of Kirsa, Disa, and Mirsasat, we passed an old caravansaray. A few wersts before we reached the village of Safian, our destined halting-place, the valley becomes narrower and narrower. We observed a mountain, which has been nearly powdered white, by a salt-spring issuing from it. Safian lies at the entrance of an immeasurable valley, at the end of which a black stripe designates the city of Tauris. Noah not having extended his settlements to this quarter, it is thought by some that Safian derives it's name from the Safis, who established their residence there when Ismael transferred his court from Ardevil to Tauris; but the village is altogether so little deserving of notice, that it would be a waste of time to enquire into the origin of it's name. In the evening two Persians, from Tauris, came to compliment the Ambassador, on the part of Abbas-Mirza, and of his first minister. They brought large fishes, and oranges, as presents. I am sorry to say

that the former were putrid, and the latter sour.

The 18th. — As the march from Safian to Tauris would have been too long, and as the Persians had made preparations for our solemn reception, our tents were pitched at the village of Segilan, twenty wersts from the city. In the evening we saw the numerous fires of the Persian army.

The 19th. — At a short distance from Tauris flows a small river, Adgasu, which has an ancient bridge of ten arches. The Persian troops extended from the latter almost as far as the place of our encampment, therefore above ten wersts: their left wing rested on the bridge, to which our musicians, grenadiers, and Cossacks, had been sent on the day before, as our solemn procession into the city was to commence from thence. When the Embassy approached the right wing, the commander of the troops saluted, the guns were fired, and the whole line presented arms. The right consisted of forty-eight pieces of horse-artillery, eight squadrons

of organized cavalry, and eight thousand regular infantry, together with bodies of Kurdins and militia. On reaching the bridge, the military governor of Tauris, Tat-Ali-Chan, advanced towards us, and, in the name of the heir to the throne, presented to the Ambassador a beautiful charger, decked with caparisons of gold and precious stones. His Excellency declined the present, stating that he could not, on any account, accept any thing previously to his public audience from the King, and His Majesty's acceptance of the Emperor's presents.

Preceded by the music, the cavalcade moved on in regular order. The heat was intolerable; and we suffered still more from the dust, which had, in the course of a few minutes, powdered us perfectly grey. The concourse of people was so great, that the troops were obliged to lay about them with their muskets, in order to clear the way, and keep the passage open. The dust obscured every thing from our sight, and we could neither distinguish the city nor its

suburbs. After a long hour of torture, we reached the house that had been prepared for our reception.

In the anti-court stood a guard of honour, and in the Ambassador's apartment there were refreshments of every kind. The house belongs to the first minister in Tauris, Mirza-Bejurk, who bears also the title of Kaimakan, corresponding to vice-chancellor of the kingdom. He has been assigned as an assistant to the King's heir; and his son is married to one of His Majesty's daughters, who is said to be a very beautiful woman. Mirza-Bejurk is a man of crafty mind, ambitious of being thought devout, and is flattered by being styled Dervish. His avarice is inordinate: the people are as much dissatisfied with him, as they, on the contrary, bless the administration of the heir to the throne. His house is, like all Persian residences of persons of distinction, an endless labyrinth of courts and small apartments. On the day after our arrival he paid a visit to the Ambassador, which His

Excellency returned after dinner. Visits of this description are consumed in an uninterrupted succession of compliments and mutual assurances of regard and affection. We admired the patience of the Ambassador, and the Persians were struck by his eloquence, for he surpassed them all in the art of complimenting. The day following that of our arrival, was the anniversary saint's day of the Archduke Constantine, and it was that which Abbas-Mirza had appointed for receiving us. After we had all performed public prayer, two noblemen came, on the part of Abbas-Mirza, to conduct us to the place of audience. Several runners who were to precede, and a number of handsome chargers, with gold equipments, were in waiting before the door of our residence. The people were forbidden to show themselves, and the streets were lined with troops in double file, as far as the palace. We dismounted in a spacious and handsome court, and passed through several others of less extent, surrounded by little rooms, in

which sat the principal persons of the city, who on the approach of the Ambassador rose, and respectfully saluted him. We went on until we entered a sort of garden, at the end of which stood the palace occupied by the heir to the throne. Over it's open side, which faced us, was spread a very large curtain of red cloth that created a delightful shade, refreshed by the playing waters of a fountain. Behind the latter Abbas-Mirza stood alone, leaning on the window. At some distance, on his right, we observed the minister Mirza-Bejurk standing against the wall; and on his left were three boys, attired in dresses ornamented with gold and precious stones: one of them was his brother, the second his son, and the third his nephew. With the exception of these persons and ourselves, there were no others present. Abbas-Mirza himself, who is averse to pomp, wore a plain red dress with silver lace: he had, like all Persians, a cap of sheep's skin, and his dagger alone was richly ornamented with jewels.

On the approach of the Ambassador, the Prince advanced a few paces towards him, and courteously offered him his hand; upon which His Excellency presented to His Highness a letter from the Emperor, which, according to eastern custom, he reverently raised towards his head, and he then laid it near him on the window.—Abbas-Mirza is thirty-five years of age, and to a handsome person unites great dignity of deportment: his conversation is sensible, and his smile well-timed. His eye is full of goodness: he is also just, never sanctions the cruelties authorised by the Persian laws, and mitigates them to the extent of his influence. After the preliminary forms of civility had been gone through, he testified his wish to become acquainted with us all. He said to each something obliging, or at least appropriate, suited to our respective stations. To the Ambassador he said,—"That the rewards of valour with which he perceived His Excellency to be decorated convinced him that he had served his sovereign

well;" and he enquired with great kindness whether he had not been wounded during this long war. The Ambassador replied, that the wound which he had received in his foot was no longer attended with unpleasant consequences; and that, besides, the good reception with which he had been honoured in Persia, was sufficient to extinguish any uneasy recollection of the past. Abbas-Mirza rejoined that he should spare no pains, as far as lay in him, to render our stay at Tauris as agreeable as possible. The Ambassador thanked him for this attention, and took his leave. When we had nearly reached the threshold, His Excellency observed that the Prince, out of civility, remained standing in his place, upon which we all turned towards His Highness, and respectfully bowed to him for the last time.—Notwithstanding his long beard and terrific moustaches, Abbas-Mirza won the hearts of us all. His aide-de-camp, who accompanied us home, was lavish in his praises of his master, whom he adores.

The officers of the English East India Company, residing at Tauris, came to visit the Ambassador, and were invited to dinner. Among them were, Major Lindsay, Major Mackintosh, Captain Hart, Captain Monteith (who had accompanied General Malcolm to Persia), Dr. Cormick, and Lieutenant Willock. Captain Willock, the chargé d'affaires of England, and Dr. Campbell, were attending the King at Teheran. These gentlemen, of whom several had been many years in Persia, were highly pleased to dine in company with Europeans, and were delighted at again hearing the sound of music, to which they had long been unaccustomed. They had all previously resided in India, the climate of which they talked of with horror. After dinner, Abbas-Mirza sent a number of saddle-horses for our use, and invited the Ambassador to accompany him on a ride. As we had to pass by the palace, His Highness came to meet us at the gate, and we proceeded together out of the city. A number of Kurdins, stationed in the suburbs,

regaled us with some of their peculiar musical compositions. Their band consisted of twenty musicians, dressed in the most fanciful colours: they wore high red caps, tapering to a point: their instruments consisted of little drums, fastened to the saddles of the horses, and of a species of clarionet, of a harsh squeaking tone. Immediately out of the city we found a body of Kurdins, and eighteen pieces of horse-artillery, which the Prince intended to review in our presence. After riding down the line, Abbas-Mirza took his station in front, about the centre of the troops, (having the Ambassador at his side, and we remaining behind them,) and ordered the cavalry to manœuvre. This produced a ludicrous scene. The aide-de-camp, who stood at a distance, and who had to carry the orders of His Highness to the commanding officer, was on foot, and in slippers. From his zeal in running backwards and forwards, he looked like an angry shrew in full chase after her husband.

The Kurdins formed into several divisions, and attacked each other. Their quickness in loading, and their remarkable dexterity in the management of their horses, are really admirable. Their favourite mode of attack, however, is with the lance, which they raise very high, swinging it powerfully, in order to increase the impetus with which they dart it at their adversary. They have no notion of saving their horses; and they stop them whilst at full speed with such violence, that one expects to see them thrown on their backs: they twist them round suddenly, and gallop back with the same speed. It is therefore not surprising, that horses in Persia should generally be weak in the legs. The Persian breed is very highly extolled; but I, who am certainly no jockey, must confess, that English horses, like those belonging to the Countess Orloff, Count Sawadaffsky, and many others in Russia, please me better. The Persian horses have long necks, carry their heads stretched out before them, have narrow

chests, and long legs; but they are very slack mettled, and easily managed. The Persians themselves give the preference to the Arabian breed. When the manœuvres were concluded, Abbas-Mirza rewarded the commander of the Kurdins with a lance, which was delivered to him by the aide-de-camp, and which he raised three times to his head, and kissed. We then rode up to the artillery, which had not moved from the spot. Abbas-Mirza, begging the Ambassador to remain on the right wing, gave his horse the spur, and stationed himself behind the centre, in order to command in person. The English officer, to whom the Persian artillery owes its formation, galloped very busily along the line, accompanied by a native orderly. The men shot with remarkable skill at a distant target; and, although they did not strike it, yet every ball fell close to the mark. Abbas-Mirza appeared highly displeased that the target had not been overturned; but the Ambassador justly compli-

mented His Highness, and observed, that if, instead of the target, to strike which is, after all, a matter of chance, a battery of the enemy had stood there, it would long since have been dismounted. Abbas-Mirza was the more pleased by this remark, as the Ambassador is himself an officer of artillery. I should take this opportunity of stating, that the introduction of regular discipline into the Persian army, and the formation of its artillery, within these few years, are entirely due to Abbas-Mirza; and it must be allowed that he has, for so short a period, with the assistance indeed of able English officers, achieved a great deal. Only those who are thoroughly acquainted with the pertinacious obstinacy of the Persians, and their dread of every innovation, can form any conception of the obstacles which the Prince had to surmount in accomplishing his views. Nothing less than the appearance of so enlightened a prince, I may say, such a phenomenon amidst the Persian people, could have pro-

duced such a reform in the army. His principal attention has been directed to the organization of the infantry and cavalry; and in this he has also afforded a proof of his acuteness, as the Persian horse is already sufficiently good, although it cannot be compared with regular cavalry. But the Persian cavalry is an object of national pride, and on that ground alone the Prince could not interfere with its actual condition. He is powerfully supported in the attainment of his views by the King, who has appointed him heir to his throne, on account of his judgment and the mildness of his character; but still more, because his mother was of the family of Kadjor, from which the Shah himself has issued. The eldest brother, who governs several of the southern provinces of the kingdom, is not much pleased with this selection. He is a coarse and cruel man, who delights in witnessing the barbarous punishments of putting out eyes, tearing out hearts, &c. He has succeeded in undermining his brother's reputation among

the principal families of Persia, whose sons all run into his service; and he has artfully led them to consider the introduction of a regular system of discipline into the army, not only as a ridiculous, but a culpable innovation, in as much as it entails an intercourse with Europeans, which is not strictly compatible with the religion of the Persians. He tells them that his brother's measures are injurious to the national honour, that his foreign predilections may perhaps induce him to adopt the customs, the dress, and even the religion of Europe; and by such idle tales as these, this man courts the favour of many Persians, who find an indolent life in his service more consonant to their inclinations, than it would be to go through the daily military exercises, and submit to the discipline of Abbas-Mirza.—The latter, nevertheless, steadily pursues the line of conduct which he has prescribed to himself; he has sent two of his sons* to

* Abbas-Mirza has sent two Persians to this country; but they are not his sons. One of them is studying surgery, and the other military engineering.—*Translator.*

England, to be educated there, and he may one day be to Persia what Peter I. was to Russia. The infantry, as well as the cavalry, are lightly and appropriately dressed. The former have blue and also red jackets of English cloth ; the latter have blue jackets trimmed with cotton lace : the officers have gold or silver lace, and wear red silk sashes, such as are used in the English army. Wide white pantaloons are generally worn, and the national cap of Persia, which does not look well. Instead of slippers the military wear boots, which they would not use, until encouraged by the example of Abbas-Mirza. The muskets are sent from England ; but they have a foundery of cannon at Tauris, and can make good powder. Their manœuvres are simple, and only framed for the purpose of moving the troops in bodies, and of making them fire regularly. The horse-artillery, and the cavalry, are provided with English sabres, and the infantry have no side arms, except occasionally bayonets.

After the Prince had shown us his artil-

lery to so much advantage, he requested the Ambassador and all his suite to accompany him to his new garden, which was not far from the place of review. We dismounted at the gate, and with the exception of Abbas-Mirza, no Persian entered the garden. Freed from the observation of his own people, who consider it criminal in a person of rank to smile, His Highness yielded to his natural disposition, and convinced us that he possesses a sound judgment, and a character highly amiable. The principal avenue through which we proceeded led straight to a lofty pavilion of several stories, built in the Asiatic style, and commanding a view of the whole city. The garden has been recently laid out in the European style, with walks and parterres: the trees are as yet young; and every thing has the appearance of having been but just finished; but the place cannot fail to grow into a magnificent spot. And here too Abbas-Mirza affords another instance of his endeavours, by his own example, to introduce

better taste among his people. Before the pavilion there is a very extensive basin, which is supplied with water from a great distance. On approaching the pavilion, the gardener presented two bouquets to the Prince, who offered the finest of them to the Ambassador. We ascended by a narrow staircase into a pleasant little apartment, from which we had a most extensive view of the whole city. The floor was covered with carpets as usual, and the walls were decorated with small paintings. We were surprised to see in two niches, in the upper part of the room, a portrait of the Emperor Alexander, and one of Bonaparte, the last of which was a striking likeness. The view of the town was not interesting: we saw nothing but walls and trees, the houses being all concealed from our view. The city is bounded on the north by mountains, whose bright red colour would lead the observer to suspect their volcanic character, if he were deaf to the thunder that rolls within their subterraneous caverns, and shakes the

very foundation of the city. We did not experience any earthquake during our residence at Tauris, although we were told that these phenomena of nature were very frequent here; and the inhabitants say that a very violent convulsion takes place periodically at the expiration of every forty years, overwhelming the greater part of the city in ruins. They now expect this awful visitation in four years hence, and yet they show no symptoms of alarm; so singular is the combined effect of habit, of hope, and of attachment to the place of our birth! We saw an old Persian, who, during the last earthquake, had lain five days buried under the ruins, where he was found by mere chance. The climate of Tauris is in other respects heavenly, and it is said to have the effect of curing fever. As there were no chairs in the pavilion, Abbas-Mirza had the civility to remain standing. His Highness at first asked the Ambassador whether he did not wish that the gentlemen of the Embassy should retire into another apartment,

as that in which we were assembled was rather crowded, and it would be difficult to hand round refreshments; but His Excellency very properly declared, that where *he* was, his officers must be present also. The Prince was not in the least discomposed by this answer, but, on the contrary, conversed with several of us. Some gentlemen of the mission, affected to consider this observation as betraying a want of good breeding and incivility; but allowing even that he did avail himself of the pretext of the apartment being crowded to get rid of us, ought this to be made a subject of reproach to him? Do they forget that he has been accustomed from his early youth to see the highest persons in the state standing in a court, or, when in his apartment, at a hundred yards' distance from him? Would not any person in his place have felt the inconvenience of being in a close and crowded room? The Prince carried his delicacy so far as even not to notice that we were trampling his carpets with our boots, while the Eng-

lish themselves never enter his apartments but in red stockings.* The preservation of this part of our costume was permitted, as a complimentary distinction to the Ambassador, as well as the members of the Russian Embassy; and it should be particularly remembered, that the watchful pride of the whole nation was extremely sensitive upon this very point of etiquette, of our pulling off our boots: it was, in truth, this apparently unimportant matter, which occasioned a total failure of our negociations with Japan and China. Abbas-Mirza conversed with his usual affability, while tea and refreshments were handing round; and we acci-

* The author has omitted to state, or probably he was not aware, that the subject of these boots had undergone some discussion previously to the audience. The Russians insisted on appearing in their national costume, and the etiquette of the Persian Court was dispensed with in their favour. With respect to the British Mission, the case is different. It's members felt no hesitation in complying at once with a custom, the observance of which is, no doubt, proper, since it conveys a harmless demonstration of respect. — *Translator.*

dentally discovered an honourable trait of his character, which in Persia excited our astonishment. The Ambassador observed in the garden a projecting corner of an old wall, which spoiled the beauty of the surrounding objects, and disfigured the prospect. His Excellency asked the Prince why he did not order the wall to be pulled down? "Only conceive," replied His Highness, with a view of forming gardens on a grand scale, I purchased the grounds of several proprietors. The owner of that where the wall stands, is an old peasant, who has absolutely refused to sell his property to me, because he will not part for any price with an ancient patrimonial possession of his family. I must allow, his obstinacy vexes me exceedingly, and yet I cannot but honour him for his attachment to his forefathers, and still more for his boldness in denying me his ground. I must wait until the time when his heir will, perhaps, be more reasonable." Who would have expected to find so much feeling in despotic Asia?

Abbas-Mirza spoke with great judgment of the organization of the Turkish army: he had a mean opinion of their cavalry; and he particularly censured the custom of carrying so much useless baggage into the field. Nor did he avoid this occasion of blaming himself: he thought that the same objection applied, perhaps, still more strongly to the Persian army; as all those who were accustomed to kallion smoking were attended by a number of followers called cinder-bearers*, who were of themselves sufficient to compose a small army, and who were not only useless mouths, but also impeded the movements of the troops, and frequently occasioned accidents by fire.

" Smoking, continued the Prince, would be unobjectionable in itself, but I find that it is carried too far in my country: it consumes nearly the whole of the day, and

* Every Persian who possesses a moderate income is constantly accompanied by a fellow, whose sole occupation consists in keeping cinders burning in an iron pan, and in filling and lighting the kallion. — *Author.*

useful occupations are frequently unattended to on its account. I have considered myself bound to set the example, and have totally renounced a favourite habit: but I have undertaken a difficult task, and one which seems to press heavily on these gentlemen: the practice is so closely connected with their habits of indolence, that they have not the courage to follow my example."

A prince who thinks and acts in this manner cannot fail to acquire the love of his people, and with that to secure the accomplishment of his great designs. It is rather singular that many persons should assert that Abbas-Mirza is indebted for his enlightened education to the Vice-Chancellor Mirza-Bejurk, a cunning old man, of no education whatever. The Prince derives his acquirements and information from very different sources: he is well acquainted with the history and the customs of Europe, and has studied the science of war, mathematics, and the English language. After we had spent a full hour in His Highness's

company, we left the garden together, and passed by the remains of a beautiful old metshet (church), which had been destroyed by an earthquake. An old dervish, most ludicrously dressed, sitting upon the ruins, with a loud voice cried out "Ali." The Prince left us at the gate of his palace, and we returned home. On the evening of the following day we were invited to go and see some fire-works which Abbas-Mirza had ordered in honour of the Ambassador. We entered a large court, which was filled with a variety of frames and preparations. In the middle was an air-balloon, the filling of which the people did not seem to understand, for it remained where it was, and could not be made to ascend. We were received by Mirza-Bejurk in a large house at the end of the court; and an immense concourse of people crowded the walls and roofs of the adjoining buildings, patiently awaiting the commencement of the entertainment: but they were principally attracted by our music, which the Ambassador had sent there

with the consent of Abbas-Mirza, with a view to gratify the curiosity of the people, and at the same time to enliven the diversion. The Prince was not present; and in this instance, again, his conduct was regulated by good feeling; for had he been there, his first minister, as well as the military governor of the city, and other personages, must have stood outside, before the window, while we should all have remained in the apartment. In staying away, therefore, His Highness showed a delicate attention to the feelings of his attendants and subjects, which did him credit. He sent his excuses, and charged his first minister to do the honours of the fête. Before dark, refreshments were brought in, and I was not a little surprised to perceive French uniforms in the court. Several of us went down to talk to the persons wearing them, and we found that they were Italians, who, it seems, had not succeeded in finding the philosopher's stone in their own country. Although bearing the rank of officers, they

appeared to us men of low origin, and one of them said that he had come to Persia because he had found it too hot in Sicily. We left these gentlemen, whose object in coming here seems to have been to dispose of themselves to the best bidder, and soon afterwards a signal was given that the entertainment should begin. A number of rockets, of a large size, were first let off, after which, through some mistake, the last row of fire-works was lighted first, upon which wheels and cascades began to set up a dreadful noise. Owing to the narrowness of the court, the fire-works were so huddled together that the last row, which had been lighted too early, set fire to the adjoining combustibles; these communicated with the remainder, and the whole works went off at once, with continual reports of mortars, producing a tremendous clatter and confusion, answering to the most poetical description of the infernal regions, &c. &c. Every thing flew about, spitting fire and spreading confusion in all directions: the

people rushed down from the walls and roofs of the houses; and our apothecary, who had never seen any thing of the kind, exclaimed with astonishment that the battle of Leipzig was a pop-gun compared to this. Thus the entertainment, which had been calculated to last an hour, was over in ten minutes; and Mirza-Bejurk, who was at first rather disconcerted, told us, with his natural adroitness, that the whole of the fire-works had been purposely lighted at once, in order that the precious moments of the Ambassador might not be wasted by such trifles. The noise was still ringing in our ears when we reached home. The English officers came and supped with us, and as it happened to be the birth-day of their Sovereign *, they drank his health in potent bumpers.

* As the reader will find in a subsequent page that the Russian Embassy left Tauris on the 26th of May, he may at first imagine that the author has committed a mistake in naming the 24th of May as the King's birth-day; but it should be recollected that the author, as a Russian, computes time according to the old style.—*Translator.*

Early on the following morning the Ambassador received a letter from Teheran, addressed to him by the Prime Minister Mirza-Jeffi, who announced, that on account of the insufferable heat of the weather in that city, it was the King's intention to receive the Embassy at his country residence of Sultanie. Abbas-Mirza offered us, in the mean time, the use of his own palace at Udgani, in case we found the heat intolerable at Tauris. This obliging offer was accepted, more with a view to enjoy freedom from the restraint of daily etiquette with which the Ambassador had been already so much plagued at Tauris, and our departure was fixed for the following day. In the mean time Abbas-Mirza requested that our musicians, and the Tserkesses, might be sent to him; probably with the view to afford his women an opportunity of hearing European music. I should mention here an odd circumstance which occurred about this time: among these Cossacks, who all professed the Mahometan religion,

there was one who had been indisposed for several days, and was attended by Dr. Müller, whos advice the man did not much relish; and as he did not feel himself getting better so rapidly as he desired, he refused to take any more physic from Müller, and begged to see a Persian physician. It seems that medicine in Persia is made to rest upon the two following axioms: heat must be repelled by cold, and cold by heat. The Persian doctor appeared, looked grave, and prescribed for the patient, who was labouring under inflammatory fever, a large quantity of ice, which the poor wretch swallowed with extacy.—he died on the third day.

The musicians and the Tserkesses accordingly waited on Abbas-Mirza. He first made the band play every piece of music that they knew, and then examined each instrument in detail, admiring the skill with which harmony was produced from such varieties of tones. He desired each musician to play singly, and after having

made them all march with music, dismissed them with rich presents. The Tserkesses were then desired to shoot with bows at a mark, which they hit very well. The Prince himself took up a bow and arrow ; missed the mark six times, and hit it the seventh: "I thought," said he, returning the bow, "that it was a more difficult matter than it really is." The men also received presents.

Tauris is generally placed on a level of comparison with Ispahan and Shiraz; and I am sorry for it, as I could have wished that there had been a Persian town of which I might have said something favourable. In describing one, it is impossible to use the term streets: they are in fact narrow foot-paths between small irregular walls; and those of Tauris are as dirty as those of any other city. The bazar here, which is reckoned the first in Persia, is nothing more than a narrow passage, the top of which is covered with rush mats, and it is lined on each side with small shops. Here and there the passage opens into a spacious court,

occupied by caravansarays, which are merely stone warehouses, where merchants deposit goods which they afterwards retail in the shops. This famed bazar winds round the city in a variety of crooked directions, and is constantly filled with idle people and speculators of every description, all pressing and elbowing each other, and often jambed against the wall by horsemen and asses. Cabbages, garlic, silk stuffs, roasted mutton, and shawls are seen in close contact. The merchants are very impudent: they ask for their goods twice as much as they are worth, and appear wretchedly poor. A shopkeeper keeps only small patterns of cloths and stuffs, and if there be a demand for more, he runs about among his friends in the bazar to get the quantity wanted. Very few of these tradesmen have shawls for sale, and when they have any, it is only in small numbers. With respect to shawls, people in Europe labour under a great mistake; those which are worn in Persia are the very worst that I ever saw: the best

are sent from Cashmire, by way of Bagdad, to Constantinople, where they fetch a good price, and are forwarded from thence to all parts of Europe. We have seen people here admire shawls which no lady in our country would think of wearing; and I am therefore not surprised that the Persian Ambassador at the court of St. Petersburgh, who took a fancy to make a present of one to the Countess Orloff, should soon afterwards have had the mortification to see it worn by her maid, while the Countess herself had on a shawl of such value, as perfectly astonished His Excellency. The Persians cannot afford to pay the prices that are given for them at Constantinople and in Russia.

Since I have entered upon the subject of shawls, I shall give a general description of the Persian costume: Every Persian, from the King downwards, wears a cap of black sheep-skin: the dress consists of a straight under garment, open about the chest, and hanging down to the heels: it is made of coarse cloth among the poor classes,

of European chintz among the rich, and that worn by the higher ranks consists of gold stuff. Over this they wear a girdle of cloth, or a shawl, according to the condition of the individual: in this they carry a dagger, of more or less value; and the officers of government have sabres besides. They wear small socks, of different colours, and slippers, which are generally green. The upper garment reaches down to the knee, and is cut out under the arms, so that the sleeves can either be drawn in, or thrown behind the back. Their hands and nails are coloured red. The whole distinction between a chan and a peasant, independently of the quality of their respective dresses, is another shawl, which the chan is allowed to wear round his cap. From the upper garments of a Persian one can form a notion of his taste and his wealth: they are made of fine English cloth, of gold stuff, and even of shawls. The costume of women (some of whom we saw during our journey, notwithstanding the stern Asiatic jealousy with

which they are watched) is very ugly: they wear pantaloons of enormous width, hanging down to their heels, and a short dress, reaching to the knee; their whole figure is shrouded in a black veil, and their faces are thickly bedaubed with paint. The higher classes wear stuffs and shawls, and the rest calicoes.

The whole art and endeavour of a Persian woman is directed to the single object of pleasing her lord; and as some fifty or sixty women have to contend for that honour at once, it is not difficult to guess what a theatre of intrigue a seraglio must be. Although a harem may be styled a *terra incognita*, since no mortal can learn what is going on there, and the woman who has once passed its threshold has renounced the world for ever, yet opportunities now and then occur of hearing something about its unhappy inmates. In the first place, the seraglios are built in such a manner, that it is impossible to peep into them from any elevated situation, even at a distance. The

principal entrance is guarded by women, and the attendance is otherwise performed by females. The poor women, who hate each other mortally, are lodged so closely to each other, that not one of them can utter a word without its being heard ; and those who might hope to alleviate their grief by mutually confiding their woes to each other, would certainly be overheard by their ever listening neighbours, and by them betrayed to their master. If, to divert the dulness of solitude, a woman should chance to sing, she is laughed at by the others. The woman who bears a son unto her lord receives the honourable appellation of *wife ;* and, presuming not a little upon that distinction, she strives to place herself above the others, who spurn her assumed superiority, and claim redress from their lord, by pleading greater youth, or more beauty. In short, these poor creatures pass the whole day at their toilet, each sighing and hoping that in the evening she may be the selected object of attention. The follow-

ing particulars, relating to the domestic economy of the harems, have been derived from respectable sources: A Persian is bound by religion and custom not only to maintain and clothe his women in the best manner, but also to allow them considerable pin-money. There are women who deny themselves many little comforts, and save their allowances, of which they afterwards secretly convey the amount by some eunuch to their lord, and such are then certain of being selected. Thus the men sell themselves to their own women. It may easily be conceived what sort of morality reigns in these harems. Unfortunately children remain there with their mothers until they are eight or ten years of age. What do they not see and hear there? They are also not unfrequently employed to draw, by innocent solicitations, their father's attention to their mother. Whether it be possible or not to manage an intrigue in a harem, is a point which I will not undertake to decide; but I heard that there have been instances of

such things, and I even saw paintings representing something of that kind. When through wars, or other causes, the men are compelled to absent themselves, it is scarcely possible that the harems should enjoy a quiet interregnum: it then becomes feasible to bribe the eunuch; and it is said, in particular, that blind men cut a figure in these intrigues. Unaware of the places to which they are led, they are kept in cellars until opportunities offer to convey them away. With the consent of the eunuch these matters must be easy to arrange. The women are particularly solicitous about the health of their lord, for when he dies they are shut up during the remainder of their lives. A child who has lived until its tenth year in a harem, witnessing its mother's conduct, cannot remain attached to its parents, since its affection has not been cemented by respect. A boy on leaving the harem enters the world, and afterwards seeks every opportunity to seduce his father's women, in which he is not un-

frequently assisted by his mother. There are instances of this, and children are on that account forbidden to see their mothers. But enough of these enormities, which I should perhaps have allowed to remain untold; on perusing them, however, the reader may join with me in thanking Providence, for having been born in a country where the dignity of woman is respected.

A celebrated river of the ancients, the Orontes*, is said to have passed through Tauris: it is now dwindled into a dirty rivulet called Spingtsha. The city lies in 38° north latitude. The heat was at the average of 22° Reaumur.

The 26th of May.—This day we left Tauris. The military governor, and other personages of the city, accompanied us out of the gates. The road proceeded through a sandy and hilly country: the little river Bavineu followed us on the left. On our right we observed at some distance from

* The Orontes was a river of Syria.—*Translator.*

Tauris a mountain still covered with snow, standing perfectly insulated. At noon we reached the village of Vasmitsh, surrounded with copse, and situated on the little river of the same name. Abbas-Mirza has ordered the inhabitants to plant trees. The Asiatics, it seems, will not without compulsion attend to their own advantage and pleasure. Wood is sold in Persia by the pound weight, and at a very dear price. In the evening we were surprised by a storm from the south-west, which brought on a heavy rain. The inhabitants thanked God for it, rain being very scarce in Persia. It seldom rains in winter, although it freezes and snows. In the evening an officer came in with a letter to the Ambassador from Abbas-Mirza, conveying, in the most flattering terms, assurances of His Highness's friendship and regard. He had even carried his politeness so far as to affix his seal* on the left hand side of the letter,

* The Persians never sign their names; but merely affix the impression of their seals.—*Author.*

which is not only a mark of high respect, but is never done in Persia except by an inferior to a superior.

The 27th.—We left our beautiful encampment; and we had no hope of seeing trees again for some time. Where are the orange groves of which we had dreamed? Where are the fields of lilies? There is not even a blade of grass to be seen. Naked mountains strewed with stones throw a greyish tint over the scenery, which fatigues the eye. Every hill deceives us with the hope that it's ascent may unfold to us some animating change in the face of nature; but in vain. Hills succeed to hills, rocks are piled upon rocks, and there is no variety but the change from dreariness to desolation. We pitched our tents to day on a swampy ground, not far from the village of Seidabad: the water was scarcely drinkable. On the left a road sinks amidst high rocks, and loses itself in awful obscurity. Alexander of Macedon, whose name the road still bears, is said to have first forced

it's passage. The spot is on this account highly interesting to the antiquary; but for my part, I thought of the green fields of my own country.

The 28th. — We began our journey by climbing up a steep hill, on the middle of which stands a caravansaray. We reached its summit at last, amidst the monotonous tinkling of the bells of our camels and mules. A steep and dangerous way leads down the other side, and an unbounded waste, covered with yellow grass, appears quite in unison with the surrounding mountains. In the midst of the plain is seen a small speck, which appears lost in this expanse of dreariness; it is the castle of Udgani. We did not at first believe our guides; but as we approached, it gradually assumed the appearance of a plantation of orange trees, which it was not unlike, from the singular style of its architecture. It may be remembered that Abbas-Mirza had the condescension to offer us this castle for our residence, until the King should come to

View of the Castle of Udgani.

Sultanie. The internal arrangement of the house is really not bad; and the whole building corresponds very well with the exterior: a corridor divides two courts, containing a number of small apartments, in two stories; panes of variegated glass in the windows are arranged with much taste. The building rests upon a handsome stone terrace, by the side of a garden, which unfortunately has been only recently planted: the trees in it are small, and afford no shade. The house is open on this side, according to the Persian custom, and forms a tolerably spacious hall, in which the Prince generally sits alone, while those to whom he gives audience stand on the terrace. There are four paintings in this hall: a portrait of our Emperor; one of Bonaparte; a battle-piece, representing a victory obtained by the Persians over the Russians, in which Abbas-Mirza, and a figure in English uniform, are placed in the fore-ground. It is a pity, however, that they should not have told us the name of this battle. The

fourth painting represents Abbas-Mirza reviewing the regular troops for the first time before his father, on the plains of Udgani: the Shah is on horseback, and the Prince lies prostrate at his feet. Some gentlemen of the mission contended that such a position was degrading: it is a pity that they should persist in confounding custom with character; in the present instance, at any rate, their observation was ill applied, for the son lies before his father. The character of the Japanese would be much more degraded, if they were to be judged according to the standard of these gentlemen; for it is the custom of the country that every individual should not only kneel before the Emperor, but also in presence of his own parents; and yet there are few nations which have stronger claims to a more strictly honourable character.— The whole building is surmounted by a broad square tower, containing a large apartment, which must afford a cool and delightful retreat during the heat of summer. In

the courts there are artificial pieces of water, and there is also a marble bath, fitted up with every convenience. It could not be the dismal country that surrounds this place that could have induced Abbas-Mirza to build a castle here: he must have been attracted by the violent winds, which regularly blow from eight o'clock in the morning until six in the afternoon, and which not only extinguish all sensation of heat, but even render a great coat a very desirable companion. No living creature is seen throughout this desolate waste, except starlings, of which immense numbers sit on the roof of the castle, and imitate the voices of different birds, and even the barking of dogs, in the drollest manner: there was no sleeping after they had begun their chatter. When we had been several days at Udgani, intelligence arrived that it would not be possible that the King could receive the Embassy before the month of August, as the nation was celebrating the religious festival of the Bairam, during which not

only no business is attended to, but from sunrise to sunset people are forbidden to taste any thing, even water, or to smoke. As this Bairam lasts two months, we had the agreeable prospect of remaining at this wretched place during the whole of that period. The bare idea of this gave a fever to two gentlemen of the Embassy; and the Ambassador himself would have been unable to resist the influence of surrounding melancholy. His Excellency, therefore, begged the memandar to look out for some other residence, where we might at least see some trees. The Chan complied with this request, and announced, shortly afterwards, that he had found a desirable village within two days' march. This information was highly pleasing to us all, although we were at the same time convinced that we should not meet with such good accommodation in any other place. Orders were immediately given to make preparations for our departure.

The 5th of June.—We this day left Udgani; at a short distance from which we observed the ruins of what tradition reports to have been a great city, which was totally destroyed by Abbas the Great during his wars. This city is said to have been inhabited by giants named Kausi *; one of whom, called Rustan, has acquired great celebrity in Persia, his name constantly occurring in eastern tales and romances.

Our road was stony, and the ground hilly. On the left we saw a great number of round stones, which the Persians assert to have been the identical seats upon which the Kausi sat and deliberated when they were at war with the Medes. Every member of

* The Kausi were Persian giants, who derive their name from King Kaus, surnamed Nimrod, who was the son of Kobada Cai-Kaus, the first king of the Persian dynasty. Kaus had the presumption to attempt to ascend into the heavens in a car, to which he had harnessed two eagles. He is said to have reigned 130 years. —*Author.*

the council was obliged to bring his own stone with him. About half way we proceeded along a small stream, abounding with fish: we stopped, and in less than an hour a supply sufficient for the whole mission was caught. It is singular that the Persians never eat fish. Our encampment was formed near the village of Tikmedash, which in the Persian language signifies *spotted stone.*

The 6th. — The road was uniformly the same; one or two old caravansarays were nearly the only objects that did not look like naked mountains. We left the high road which leads to Teheran, and proceeded to the left. After a good hour's march, we were surprised by coming suddenly in sight of a beautiful valley, in which a murmuring stream pursued its serpentine course through the most picturesque shrubbery. We caught an occasional glimpse of the village of Sengilabat, our destined place of residence, where we found our tents most agreeably placed close to the

stream, under the shade of old poplars and apricot trees, which seemed as if they were joined together by garlands of roses. The wind was shut out by the surrounding mountains, here and there covered with tufts of high grass; and herds of cattle grazing on their surface, heightened the interest of the landscape. An old tower very appropriately completes this picturesque scenery. The heat was about 24° Reaumur, in the shade. The trees of our encampment were at times illuminated in the evening; the band played, and Russian songs resounded in the mountains of Persia. The inhabitants, who at first were extremely shy, gradually threw off their reserve, and even participated in our amusements. Some gentlemen of the Embassy, who disguised themselves in women's clothes, in which they really did not look much amiss, deceived the Persians so completely, that the memandar himself, who knew us all personally, would not, for some time, believe that they were men; and seemed to think

that we had found means to carry women with us, in a manner to elude his observation. The inhabitants of the village were extremely delighted with our female dress: they were, however, surprised that a veil formed no part of it; and they frequently asked whether, in our country, every one might really look at a woman with impunity? Yes, thought I, we may with the impunity that you mean; but how often are we not made to pay dearly for our privilege of looking at them! The heat compelled us to give up the usual European mode of living, and we found it much better to follow the example of the Persians. We accordingly breakfasted at nine o'olock in the morning, and lay in the shade until six o'clock, when we dined.

I had the misfortune to be in a tent where, one day, an immense phalangium was caught. It must have been a female, for in the same evening ten smaller reptiles made their appearance, and ran about the corners of the tent, as if looking for some-

thing. A phalangium is an enormous spider, covered with hair of a red colour: its feet are furnished with small claws, and its mouth has four front teeth, with which it bites dreadfully. It is very malicious, and is always angrily whizzing and springing about. When it is placed in a glass with a scorpion, a bloody contest ensues, in which the phalangium always proves victorious: indeed the scorpion is lucky, if the phalangium does not immediately divide him at one bite. It must be allowed that these are very unwelcome visiters in a tent. They frequently deprive one of all sleep. If the light be put out, one has the horror of fancying that they are crawling on the bolster by hundreds; but if the light be left burning, they run into the flame.

We found ourselves rather ill off with respect to wine under the Persian management, for none is made except in Armenia, and that only for the use of the people themselves. They were, therefore, obliged

to hunt for it in every village, far and wide; and it was generally so bad, that nobody could drink it. It would have been a very easy matter for the Persian government to have procured some from Grusia, since they had undertaken to maintain us in Persia at their own expense, in return for the reception which their embassy had experienced in St. Petersburgh, where they drank the best wine, and were gratuitously provided with every thing that they could want. As that was not done, the Ambassador had too high a sense of delicacy to ask for Grusian wine; but His Excellency ordered a supply from Tiflis, which arrived here to our great satisfaction, and was issued to us in daily portions. It is very dangerous to drink water in Persia, because it occasions fever, which it is afterwards not easy to get rid of. As the Persians did not seem to have any objection to the matter, we subsequently received two further supplies of wine from Tiflis.

It is not a little singular that in this

season of the year we should have seen no fruit, excepting bad cherries. Vegetables are not to be had at all. It is really a miserable country! If the accounts of travellers were true, abundance of fruit would every where meet the eye; the people would be arrayed in magnificent shawls; and reposing in luxury on roses, would be admiring a beautiful sky. Many of our friends, no doubt, think that at this moment we too are on a bed of roses; instead of which we lie on hard and sandy ground, heartily wishing to be removed from our terrestrial paradise.

Two English travellers, Colonel Johnson and Captain Salter, who are journeying overland from the East Indies to England, staid with us several days. The Colonel spoke very good French, and seemed a man of extensive information. The English who wish to proceed overland to England from the East Indies, come by sea into the Persian Gulf, where they land at the fortress of Bendarabas, which formerly belonged to

the Portuguese, subsequently to the Persians, and is now, for the sake of greater security, in the hands of the English; for there is a pearl fishery in the neighbourhood, which naturally requires to be well protected. From Bendarabas they proceed to Shiraz, where the excellent wine of that name grows, and they take pleasure in visiting the ruins of Persepolis. At Teheran they meet with a friendly reception; at Tauris they are received by their own countrymen; and from Tiflis they travel post through Little Russia and Poland, to Hamburgh, or any other place they prefer.

Colonel Johnson had brought with him several coins from Persepolis, where they are dug out of the ground without difficulty; and he also showed us some broken pieces of bas reliefs, having inscriptions on them, which nobody can read. Persepolis is, perhaps, the only city in the world of which it is unknown when it was built, by whom it was inhabited, and how it was destroyed. It is known only that it was conquered by

Alexander the Great. It has been said, that one of his women obtained from him by her importunities permission to set fire to the city. But the most singular circumstance relative to these ruins is that they by no means seem to indicate the previous existence of dwelling houses, but have the general appearance of being the remains of one immense temple, or at least of several smaller ones. In one place, numbers of pillars of different dimensions stand upon a terrace; in other places they are grouped, and found in all positions; but not a trace is found of a house, nor any thing resembling the ruins of one. The capitals of the columns evidently prove that they never could have been connected together. What then was Persepolis? Perhaps some temple of enormous size, such as surpasses the conceptions of the present generation. There is no village, nor are there any ruins in its vicinity: not even grass grows; and the superb remains of this singular temple lie in a desert. Among the many inscriptions which are found there, it

is not a little remarkable that some should be in Greek characters, in which the name of Artaxerxes occurs. The human figures are mostly in a costume now unknown. Some of these must be meant to represent kings or rulers, for the figures that surround them are placed in attitudes of respect; and the sovereigns are covered with mantles, on the edges of which are unknown characters. Besides several coins, Colonel Johnson sent to the Ambassador a piece which had been broken off the wing of a sphynx.

By way of variety, perhaps also to relieve the inhabitants of Sengilabat, the memandar proposed a change of residence to the Ambassador; and we accordingly left, with regret, our shady valley, the most agreeable that we met with in Persia.

The 20th. — We set out early in the morning of a fine day, leaving on our right the high road, which pursued its direction through a dreary waste; and following the mountains on our left, we passed through a pleasant country, and some pretty villages,

until at noon we reached that of Versagan, where our tents were pitched in a plantation of apricot trees. The satisfaction which we felt at the sight of these was not of long duration, as the Persians assured us that they were the last that we should meet with for some time, an observation which unfortunately proved to be too true.

Although Versagan, as a residence, could not be compared to Sengilabat, yet the surrounding country is very beautiful, and is watered by the little river Versagantshai. We observed the remains of a large building, which, together with the whole district, belongs to the brother of the unfortunate Sadik-Chan, formerly owner of the village.

The cruel history of this nobleman is as follows.—When the reigning Shah aspired to the throne, the nation was divided by several parties, who fought with each other until they were all reduced to submission by the Shah. Sadik-Chan, the richest and most powerful partizan, was alone able to keep up a long resistance; but being at last

overwhelmed by superior forces, he was totally defeated, and obliged to fly. He succeeded in effecting his escape to Grusia, where he sued for and obtained protection. Some time after, he received letters from the Shah, holding out assurances of forgiveness of the past, and promises of friendship; adding, that he had only to return quietly, and resume his possessions. His friends warned him to be cautious; but he suffered himself to be deluded, and went to Teheran, where he was immured alive, and starved to death, after having nearly eaten his own hands.

The barbarous character of this people would seem to render recourse to strong measures necessary; and yet the present king is a very mild ruler, such indeed as Persia has not been blessed with, from time immemorial. The Persians seem to consider with great indifference, tortures more dreadful than death itself; and they reckon among their mildest punishments, that of being beat on the soles of the feet, until

they are rendered incapable of walking for many months; or undergoing a dreadful beating with a tremendous bludgeon, most unmercifully applied, with no worse consequences than a broken rib or two.

The King's own brother gave an unparalleled example of patience under suffering. His Majesty had several times discovered that he was planning conspiracies against his life, but had forgiven him on each occasion, from the hope of conciliating him by mildness. Having, however, been once more detected in similar practices, the King desired that he should be arrested, and sent to him to say that his "eyes pleased him greatly." "If my eyes please him, he may take them," was the brother's reply. He allowed them to be cut out without a murmur, and they were presented to the King on a gold plate.

It had been determined that we should stop only one day at Versagan; but the arrival of MM. Masarowitsh and De Ricard, who, it will be remembered, had

been dispatched, in the month of January, from Tiflis to Teheran, prolonged our stay at the village one day more. It appears that the King received them very graciously, and told them that he would soon proceed to Sultanie. After their audience of leave, His Majesty ordered that the whole of his palace should be shown to them, which they described as very handsome.

The 22d. — This day's march was very short, and had merely for its object to regain the high road, which we had quitted at Sengilabat, to remain in the mountains, where the atmosphere is cooler. We encamped at the village of Turkmantshai, which has a small stream of the same name. At two days' march from this place lies the town of Miana, which owes its fame to a species of venomous bugs. These vermin, however, have also strolled into the vicinity, and even as far as this place.—Our friends, who joined us the day before, told us of an adventure which had happened to a Chan

at Teheran. I need scarcely premise that wine is forbidden to the Moslems by their religion. A certain Chan, however, was so lax in his observance of this law, that his conduct reached the ears of the King, who at first reproved him in strong terms for his immorality, and caused him afterwards to be chastised. These measures having no effect, His Majesty commanded the Chan to continue drinking, which order he so faithfully obeyed, that he remained in a state of intoxication during forty days, and thus became so disgusted with the practice that he gave up drinking, and begged His Majesty to revoke his command.

The 23d. — We travelled the whole of this day over a dreadfully rugged ground, which does not afford one drop of water. We saw by the side of our route, on distant heights, the villages of Hodgakoshan and Tshanachplach; and the chains of the Caplanta Mountains bounded the view before us in the horizon. Our encamp-

ment was at Avanlug, where a small plantation of apricot trees afforded us sufficient shade. At this place, if a small piece of the wall of a house be broken off, hundreds of venomous bugs are found. We caught several phalangia of enormous size, and a curious little animal, with two long hind legs, which could spring, but was unable to walk at all. Its colour was red, and it was altogether a very beautiful little animal.

The 24th. — We passed through several deserted villages, from which (as the Persians assured us) the inhabitants had been driven away by the bugs. A long naked valley led straight to the little town of Miana, the governor of which came to meet the Ambassador, with the usual Persian ceremonies. As this town is the chief residence of the bugs, we were under the necessity of establishing our encampment four wersts farther, on the banks of the river Karlanku, at the foot of the Caplanta Mountains. A fine bridge, of twenty-

three arches, leads over this now inconsiderable river, which I should, however, imagine must swell considerably during the rainy season. This bridge was built by Abbas the Great: it has several internal passages, and on the steps, at the end, stand four pillars, one of which has fallen to ruins.

The venomous bug, properly called the Miana bug, is worthy of the particular notice of the naturalist. It is rather larger than the common European bug; is of a grey colour, inclining to black; and its back is covered with small red points, scarcely distinguishable, on account of their number. It is only found in walls, and its frequency, and the intensity of its poison, are in proportion to the age of the building. It does not make its appearance by day-light, although, certainly, there have been instances to the contrary. These bugs have existed at Miana from time immemorial, and have gradually spread into the neighbourhood, where, however, they are not equally venomous. In

winter they lie in walls, in a state of torpor, and, like all poisonous reptiles, are most dangerous during the heat of summer. I should mention, that houses in Persia are not built with bricks, but (particularly those of Miana and every village) with loam, which is kneaded with fine cut straw.

The most remarkable, and indeed quite a peculiar feature in the history of these bugs is, that they do not bite the inhabitants; or at least if they do, the bite is as little felt by them, as the sting of our bugs is felt by us: but they would certainly bite every stranger who should pass the night at Miana; and there is no antidote to the poison of their sting, which proves mortal in four-and-twenty hours. Of its fatal effects in two instances I have heard the precise particulars. The English at Tauris told me repeatedly, that they had lost a servant at Miana, who had had the misfortune to be stung by one of these vermin: he complained immediately of parching heat over his whole body; shortly after-

wards became delirious, and expired in dreadful convulsions. Colonel Baron Wrede, who has long served with credit in Grusia, and who some years ago came to Persia on a mission, relates a better authenticated instance of the poisonous sting of these bugs. It was pretty late in the year, and the Baron thought that the effect of their bite was not so dangerous as was reported: he therefore determined to pass the night at Miana, taking, however, the precaution to keep a light burning in his apartment. Every one happily escaped, with the exception of a Cossack, who the next morning observed a black spot on his foot. The man talked wildly, and at last became delirious. The inhabitants recommended, as an antidote to the poison, that an ox should be slaughtered, and that his skin should be wrapped, whilst warm, round the Cossack's foot: this was done, but to no purpose; he died in dreadful convulsions. The inhabitants assert that some persons who had been stung, had been

saved by tasting nothing but water, sugar, and honey, for forty days. They take them in their hands without danger. It is very fortunate that clothes and similar articles do not harbour these vermin; otherwise they might perhaps have spread throughout the whole country.

Miana is celebrated for its manufactories of carpets, which are made from camels' hair, and look very well in point of colour. The town's people brought many of them into our camp, which we bought in defiance of the bugs. Several of us even slept that night on the carpets, although I will not pretend to say very much at our ease: our worthy friend the apothecary, however, who is a great wag, was dancing about the whole of the night.

The 25th. — A paved way which was built by Abbas the Great, and which is still, in some places, kept in very good order, led us through romantic windings amidst chasms of black rocks, into the mountains of Caplanta, which separate the pro-

vince of Aderbegan (ancient Media) from Irakka-atgem (ancient Parthia). When we had reached the summit of the ridge, we stopped to admire the wonders of the prospect which was open to our view. On one side we saw Miana and the mountains which extend nearly to Tauris; on the other, heights of various shapes and colours, heaped together, raise their golden summits into the boundless horizon, tipped by a small blue streak resembling a wavy cloud. These are the mountains near which Sultanie lies, The face of the country in that direction discovers its poverty. Neither tree nor grass is seen; nothing but a yellow sandy soil refracting various colours, and forming a striking contrast with the country which we had just left. After having remained here a while, exposed to the violence of the wind, we began to descend, an operation which is rendered considerably easier by the frequent winding of the road. On our left we observed, on the insulated summit of a rock, the ruins of a fortress called

Virgin's Fort. It is said to have been built by Artaxerxes, who confined there a young female, from whom it has derived its appellation. It is to be lamented that Abbas the Great should have caused this place to be nearly destroyed on account of robbers who resided there, and rendered the passage of the mountains insecure. But a wall is still seen, which, in a wonderful manner, runs from the top of one rock to another, being built on very unequal ground round the whole fort. In the centre there is still a kind of house, with a patch of roof, but which, singularly enough, has no door. I got upon the roof and found there only a hole, into which I threw a stone, which re-echoed a hollow sound. The whole place was filled with a great quantity of stones and shells. One of the party was fortunate enough to find a couple of muscles which had grown together, which is in itself a curiosity, independently of their being petrified. Indeed the colour of the mountains authorises the presumption that they con-

tain great mineral treasures. It proved much easier to climb into the fort than to descend from it; every body was obliged to slide down as well as he could.

The road continued to descend the mountain, at the base of which flows the river Kisil-osun (Golden River). Here and there we observed small shrubs on our way, which were curiously hung with bits of rags of all colours; and we were told that the name of Pir is given to one of these places, and that this was considered a sacred spot, at which travellers, when they think themselves too weak to continue their journey, or are otherwise distressed, perform their devotions, and leave behind pieces of their clothes, after which they proceed on their journey strengthened and comforted.

On reaching the last height, we perceived a beautiful bridge of three arches over the Kisil-osun, built with yellow free-stone. The arches are very large and bold, and have an Arabic inscription on the edges, purporting that the bridge was erected 144

years ago, by an inhabitant of the town of Casbin. Millions of swallows build their nests under the arches. At one end of the bridge there is a door-way leading into the interior, which consists of large rooms. The radius of the middle arch is eight fathoms; but in one place there is a chasm which may become dangerous in the course of time. Not far from the bridge stand the walls of a caravansaray. The striking contrast of the naked black mountains with the verdant banks of the river, affords splendid scenery. Viewed from a certain distance, the bridge appears as if suspended in the air. Here the celebrated English traveller Browne was murdered. On leaving the bridge the road follows the right bank of the river, which it, however, soon leaves to rise into a sandy mountain, refracting singular variegations of red and bright yellow colours. The first mountain adjoining the river is remarkably steep, and the road winds slowly into it. Immediately after passing it, we reached our encamp-

ment at the caravansaray of Dgamalabad, which is still in good preservation, although it has stood 520 years.

The 26th. — We were told that the great heat begins here. The country had, indeed, every appearance of this being the case. Eternal sand plains, on which there grows not a blade of grass to relieve their uniformity, on all sides meet the eye that anxiously seeks variety of any kind. We rode on, enveloped in a thick cloud of dust, while nothing was to be heard but the provoking sameness of the jingling bells of the camels. It is said that for weeks together not a breath of air is felt here. The dust raised by the traveller remains suspended in the air, and forms a nebular substance, floating over his head just at the height at which it is best calculated to teaze him to desperation.

We found our tents pitched near the caravansaray of Sardgam, not far from which we, to our astonishment, perceived a small village; but my surprise increased

when I learned that these poor people had settled there by command of Abbas-Mirza. The river Sangatshai, which flows through this desert of sand, is the only place where the inhabitants can grow corn : it had been already cut.

The 27th. — The dreadful heat of the weather this day, rendered the dreary prospect of the desert still more intolerable. The road is continually approaching, and then leaving again, the river Sangatshai. What a country ! How is it possible that nature could have produced any thing so hideously frightful ?

I will endeavour to describe it in a very few words. Let the reader picture to his imagination a sea of liquid loam, of which the waves, whilst violently agitated by a storm, have been instantaneously petrified ; and the wavy surface, thus formed, being afterwards split by the parching rays of the sun into innumerable fissures, will afford some idea of the sort of country over which it was our lot to travel this day, until we reached the

caravansaray of Nipke, where we arrived covered with dust, and almost roasted alive. This caravansaray, which lies at no great distance from the river Sangatshai, was built in the year 1049 of the Mahomedan æra, by Bagadir Shah, who having on his return from the siege of Erivan rested at this place, ordered the minister of Ispahan, Tuki-Hedai-Talahof, to erect this building in remembrance of the circumstance. — This is the boundary of the district of Tauris.

The 28th. — It is remarkable that on the other side of the mountains of Caplanta, the wind regularly begins to blow from eight o'clock in the morning, and ceases at six in the afternoon. Here it is the reverse; the wind blows from six in the evening, throughout the whole night, until morning. The air is perfectly calm the whole day, and the heat is intolerable.

After having marched this day through a country as horrible as that over which we went yesterday, we were agreeably surprised to find trees, at our encampment, near the

village of Jengidge, having seen none since we left Miana. The shady trees, and a stream which afforded wholesome water, which is a rare circumstance in Persia, were sufficient to induce the Ambassador to stop there two days, even if the consideration had been wanting of our having performed seven marches without one day's rest. Our next station is the town of Sangan, which is governed by a son of the Shah, Avdula-Mirza.*

The 30th. — The Ambassador had been informed by the memandar, that Avdula-Mirza was making preparations for receiving us with solemnity at Sangan. But as His Excellency dislikes ceremony, and as the heat of the weather would have rendered it still more irksome to him, we broke up at two o'clock in the morning, and succeeded in reaching Sangan before any of

* When the word Mirza stands after a name, it signifies the son of a Shah; but when placed before a person's name, it is equivalent to the title of nobleman or gentleman. — *Author.*

its inhabitants were awake. Our road took us along the river Sangatshai, which we had left the day before yesterday, and we observed on its banks the villages of Bari, Sarim, Gushker, and others surrounded by gardens.

The town of Sangan has a pretty appearance; it is encircled by a wall, surmounted by small towers. In the middle of the place, a square tower, with green blinds, is seen rising out of the palace of Avdula-Mirza, which is occupied by his women. It appeared to us as if the ladies of Sangan were not so prudish and so strictly watched as they are in other places, for they peeped out of the doors, raising their veils, and showing us some very pretty faces: on this point, however, we were then scarcely qualified to give an opinion, for we had not seen a female face for two months, and I really think that any thing in women's clothes, would have pleased us.

A large handsome house was allotted for the reception of the whole party. The

palace of Avdula-Mirza stood close to our residence, so that the inhabitants of the tower alluded to, could look into our court and windows.

After the Ambassador had received the visits of several personages of distinction, His Excellency, followed by gentlemen of his suite, proceeded to pay his respects to Avdula-Mirza, who had the extreme politeness to offer chairs to the Ambassador, and each gentleman who was with him. He is a young man, twenty-four years of age; is one of the King's youngest sons, and bears a strong resemblance to Abbas-Mirza, to whom he is much attached. In compliment to his brother, he keeps two battalions of regular troops, for whom he has built a fine barrack near his palace.

As we staid several days at Sangan, I visited the bazar; it is a poor and dirty place. We saw a great number of turquoises in the shops, which, although they

are the produce of Persia, may be purchased much cheaper in Russia. Persia is the only country in the world in which these stones are found, and there are only two mines of them. The one has been only lately discovered, and produces very inferior specimens of the stone. The old mine, of which the king monopolized the produce for his own use, is unfortunately situated in the province of Corrossan, which is at present in a state of rebellion. There was an abundant display of fruit at the bazar, but all unripe, with the exception of pears, which were excellent.

Avdula-Mirza, having two sick children, requested the attendance of Dr. Müller, whose enviable fate it thus was to see a harem full of pretty women. At his first visit, the children were brought out to him by the eunuch. They cried as if they had been whipped, so that the doctor could do nothing with them. The second time, the mothers and nurses carried the children themselves. But Asiatic jealousy is never

off its guard. A thick curtain was suspended between Müller and the women, who held forth the children from underneath it. He saw nothing but pretty hands and toes. O happy doctor!

Every evening we had music, to hear which the whole town assembled about the house and in the court; several figures also looked on from the tower, but the blinds and the high balustrades concealed from our view the objects which we were so anxious to see. I hope that the ladies were equally disappointed; otherwise we must have left on their minds no very favourable impression of the complexions of Europeans.

There is here a fly, so small that it can scarcely be seen, which stung us to such a degree that our faces and bodies were, like partridge's eggs, covered with red spots, accompanied by a continual and violent itching, which placed the whole embassy in a state of great activity. This fly is peculiar to the town, and only stings strangers.

Thus Persian towns are not without their peculiarities! The inconvenience which we felt from the great partiality with which these insects had honoured us, induced the Ambassador to solicit a change of residence, which request was the more willingly granted, as intelligence arrived that the King had left Teheran, and was proceeding by slow marches (diverting himself with sporting all the way) to Sultanie, which is only at a distance of two days' journey from hence. Avdula-Mirza had received orders from his father to join him, and therefore left us. We followed him on the 5th of July, and found a large encampment prepared for us, at a distance of twelve wersts from Sultanie, near the ruins of the village of Samanarchie, where we were to await the arrival of the King. The second minister, Mirza-Avdul-Vehab, had arrived before us, and had pitched his tents close to ours. He was sent by the King to pay his compliments to the Ambassador, and keep us company until His Majesty's arrival. He

visited the Ambassador the same day; and we found him to be a man of great ability, and of agreeable manners. He always dressed with great taste, and seemed vain of his person, which might be excusable, for he was certainly a handsome man. Being a seit *, he never hesitates to tell the King the truth; and he is otherwise much beloved, on account of his judgment and the sincerity of his character.

As the King travelled very slowly, and his astrologers had named an auspicious day, before which time he would not dare to come to Sultanie, we remained twenty days in camp at Samanarchie.—As far as the eye could reach, there was not a tree to

* A sect in Persia, which descends from Mahomet, and is held in esteem and veneration. A seit considers himself privileged to tell the truth to the King at all times. He is at liberty to enter any house, and his host is obliged to give him the best reception, and even to offer him presents. The lowest Persian, as a seit, can have immediate access to a minister whenever he pleases, and seats himself at his table; particularly if the latter be himself a seit. — *Author.*

gladden it; and even the spot on which we resided was only covered with withered grass, such as we see in Europe after a first frost in autumn. The thermometer was at 30° Reaumur, in the shade. It was found necessary to draw up the sides of the tents, and we lay stretched out the greater part of the day without the power to move. Fortunately for us, no day elapsed without wind, which gently waving through the tents afforded a very refreshing relief. Even the nights were warm. The thermometer was never lower than 8°, and I should mention as a remarkable circumstance that the atmosphere was so dry that a sheet of paper exposed to it's action did not imbibe any moisture from it.

The Emperor's presents to the King, were sent from Astrachan across the Caspian sea. They had been landed on the Persian coast, and had now safely arrived at Sultanie. This circumstance afforded us a pretext for occasional excursions to Sultanie, where His Majesty was not expected to ar-

rive until the 19th of July. I also took a ride to the place, but rather with the view to visit the palace, of which it might perhaps be difficult to procure a sight after the King's arrival. Although it's distance from our encampment was only twelve wersts, yet it's elevated situation occasions a perceptible difference of climate. It froze during the night. I could scarcely credit my own feelings, for there could not be a doubt but that I was in Persia under the 36° of latitude. The white grass before sunrise, however, convinced me of the truth. The first rays of the sun suddenly create 10° of heat, and in less than three hours, increase it to 30°.

The morning discovered to our view a most dreary prospect from Sultanie, and my hopes that our future place of residence would be an agreeable one, vanished. The castle stands on a small height surrounded by a few trees, and looks like any thing but the summer residence of a King. I could not conceive how His Majesty could ac-

commodate his courtiers near his person; but I observed upon further examination that tents had been pitched for them round the whole extent of the palace, and that only the King and his harem resided in the castle properly so called.

Behind the castle lies a village of the same name; on the left stands a large magnificent metshet, surrounded by the ancient ruins of the town of Sultanie. The whole spot is encircled by lofty naked hills, which afford nothing to relieve the eye. And is this a summer residence? The situation, however, is certainly cool, and a strong wind blows constantly.

I went to the castle, where I found a number of workmen employed in repairing broken windows and floors, whitening the walls, cleaning and placing the whole castle in a state fit for the reception of the sovereign of Persia. With the exception of the audience chamber, which forms the open side of the palace, and from which there is a very tolerable prospect, there was not

one apartment which looked like the chamber of a palace. It is, however, necessary to state, that the King passes only a few months here, perhaps, once in four years. The other rooms on the first story were little holes, connected with each other by doors and passages. At the end of the building I ascended, by a covered staircase, into a space encircled by a high wall, in the middle of which stood an octagonal sort of tower surmounted by a dome. It has doors on all sides; in the inside there are a number of small chambers formed around a large apartment in the center, on the walls of which are inscribed Persian apophthegms. This is the residence of the principal women, and the seat of luxury and enjoyment. It appeared, however, much in want of cleaning. From the space upon which this building stands, a small door leads into a tower from which the women may enjoy a view of the camp. Such is the description of the place, of which a correct drawing has been annexed. Opposite the castle tents

were pitched in order that the presents might be laid out in them.

I must confess that I returned much out of humour to Samanarchie, where my spirits were not raised by hearing of the death of one of our Tserkesses.

The Ambassador dispatched an officer to the King, in order that he might know with certainty how far off His Majesty then was. The former returned in a few days, and reported that the King was at no great distance, but that his mode of travelling might delay his arrival for some time. He was proceeding at short stages, and shooting all the while. It happened to the officer that his followers demanded more horses at a village than were requisite; perhaps too, they wanted to keep some of those which they had already. The villagers made a great noise, but were awed into submission by the memandar, who gives orders in the name of the Government. The peasantry in these cases have the ludicrous privilege of calling their wives to their assistance, which is

readily afforded in the following singular manner: they throw a handful of earth over their heads, shouting "Ali sees that we are out of our minds;" upon which they assail with impunity the object of their fury. I am not sure that it would be very safe to grant a similar privilege to the sex in Europe.

Owing to the solemn fast of the Ramasan, scarcely a Persian was to be seen. They sat in their tents, and fasted the whole day, a penance which in such weather would have been more easily submitted to than the painful thirst accompanying it. But when the last rays of the sun had sunk behind the horizon, a loud shout was raised by a Mollah, which was considered the signal of the end of the fast of that day, and immediately the mouths of the whole camp eagerly commenced the work of making up for lost time. These fasts have a powerful effect on the constitution, particularly as they last for months; and they produce a visible

effect on the Persians, who during the time are in a state of great lassitude, and almost mental imbecillity.

The Ambassador also took a ride to Sultanie, and in the evening when he returned, gave an entertainment in the open air to Mirza-Avdul-Vehab, at which the band played, and we drank the health of the King in the true European style. This festive demonstration of joy on proclaiming our good wishes in favour of any person, seemed highly to please the minister, who is very susceptible of pleasing impressions. He is also said to have acquired some celebrity by the effusions of his muse, a distinction of which a Persian is not a little proud; and therefore when the Ambassador spoke to him of my father as a celebrated European writer, he said, "*therefore a man like myself.*"

Mirza-Avdul-Vehab invited us to dinner on the following day, which, on account of the Ramasan, could not take place before eight o'clock in the evening. At an

early hour he sent to the Ambassador a valuable present of Shiraz wine. It has much resemblance to port wine, but is lighter, and has an agreeable aromatic flavour. The minister had the attention to borrow from us chairs, knives and forks, &c. in order that the Ambassador might not be exposed to the embarrassment of eating with his fingers. Every thing was laid in his tent with great neatness, and the dishes were not piled upon each other in the Persian fashion, but carried round, which was another instance of attention on his part to the Embassy. After we had taken our seats, we waited until the Mollah had shouted. When this signal had been given, a small box was brought to the minister, out of which he took some opium to whet his appetite. The various sweet and sour dishes which were offered to us, as well as the bread, which is a cake of meal baked in the sun, were certainly not much relished by us; but the wine was good, and that of Ispahan much resembles Madeira.

After dinner we proceeded into another tent, where coffee, without sugar, and kallions, were offered to us. As the Persians smoke after every dish of which they partake, these kallions had already figured at dinner in such numbers, that we might have thought ourselves present at a concert of bassoons.

The ambassador was so obliging as to give me the unmerited designation of astronomer, upon which the minister begged me to call upon him the next day, inasmuch as he also was a great lover of astronomy and mathematics. At the appointed time, therefore, the councillor of embassy and of state, M. Negri, had the goodness to accompany me to the minister's, as the ordinary interpreters could not have carried on a conversation on abstruse subjects.

It occurred to me that as the Persians attach great importance to astrology, it was necessary that I should give some astrological interpretation of the arrival of the Embassy in Persia. Jupiter happened at

that time to be in the constellation of the scorpion; I therefore expounded to the minister that this planet, by its greatness and splendor, represented Russia, and that in Europe the scorpion was generally understood to represent Asia: now, as these happened to be in conjunction, there could be no doubt that the friendship of both nations had been cemented in heaven. The Minister confirmed my declaration; and asserted that the Persian astrologers had also stated that the Russian Embassy had arrived under favourable omens of the heavenly bodies.

A fat Persian, who was the only individual present at the conference, sat by the side of the minister, having a great book before him, of which he continually turned over the leaves, occasionally darting from underneath two black bushy eye-brows a very furious squint at me. The minister extolled him as a great mathematician; but I rather believe that the gentleman was an astrologer. He continued to turn over the leaves of the book with great violence of

action, and muttered something to the minister; upon which the latter asked me how eclipses were produced? I stood up, and walked round the fat astrologer, who looked about him with a mixture of vexation and alarm, not understanding what my object was; and he became still more frightened when I squatted down behind his back, and asked the minister whether he could then see me? The astrologer was in reality fat enough to conceal me from the minister's view, who accordingly replied, laughing, in the negative. I then stood up, and begging that the astrologer would not be affronted if I compared him to our terrestrial globe, said to the minister that he was then representing the sun, I the moon, and that the whole proceeding, which still continued to disconcert the astrologer was an eclipse of the moon. I then placed myself between the sun and the earth, and said, that now that the astrologer could no longer see the former, there was an eclipse of the sun; but that the bulk of the earth's repre-

sentative prevented me from exhibiting a total eclipse. The sun laughed; and the earth growled. But we cannot please every *body* in this world. When it came to the minor eclipses, however, I was honoured with more gracious looks from the astrologer, as I had no occasion in these cases to shut him out from the sight of the sun.

After these gentlemen had played parts so flattering, they became overbearing, and maintained that every thing that we saw on the heavens was mere splendor of the gods; that Jupiter, Saturn, and Venus, were the only planets which they considered as bodies, much happier indeed than the earth, because they were placed so much nearer to the sun than we were, and were also much warmer. With respect to Venus, I rejoined, they were right, she is considerably nearer the sun than we are, otherwise we could not see her cross the sun every hundred years; but Jupiter and Saturn are much more distant from the sun than we are, and for that very reason can never ap-

pear between him and us. The astrologer, who was afraid that he should be called upon to play his part in another eclipse, agreed to every thing, and turned in his book to a large leaf, upon which there was a drawing of a goat, and hieroglyphicks. After he had several times bestowed upon these a look of satisfaction, he asked me very seriously, what then, in our opinion, lay behind all the stars? I told him that this was a point upon which our astronomers were not yet agreed, but that probably there were behind these stars other stars without end, and that if there were an end, such end was connected with a beginning which yet had no end. Here the goat dropped from his hands: he gave a smile of triumphant sagacity, and said that these matters were as yet too puzzling for Europeans. He lifted up his great book, and again turning over it's leaves, said with great complacency, "We will talk no more upon these subjects now." Nobody could be more delighted at this than I was, for the

without beginning and the without end is a subject which I am sure I understand much less than he does.

The astrologer's hand remained upon a leaf, covered with small points, between which there appeared to be painted thousands of little devils. He asked what was our theory of winds? I commenced an explanation about thin and dense strata of air, which being more or less rarified in different places by the sun, might fall into a kind of undulation, which by increased agitation produced wind, and that it was more than probable that the latter only originated within the atmospheric range of the earth, as we meet beyond that with a thin air which we call etherial fluid, and — "What nonsense you are talking!" exclaimed the astrologer. "Such are the Europeans: they are continually twisting about the origin of things, and thereby lose sight of the objects themselves. Wind is a matter which exists by and for itself, acting and filling the whole space between visible and

invisible bodies. How otherwise could comets come flying out? These are the true purifiers of the wind; they fly about, burning every thing that might check or destroy the power of wind: wind is a salutary gift of God!" In this country where wind is a commodity of indispensable necessity, it is certainly natural enough that they should think so.

In the mean time he had been himself making a great deal of wind by tumbling over the leaves of his book. He at last stopped with satisfaction at a leaf on which were painted a number of balls, above which were some hideous figures. "What is your opinion," said he, "of the movements of bodies? Is the sun stationary, or does it move?"—"It is stationary," was my reply. —"So I thought! Are you then ignorant of the acting power of nature which is single of its kind? Nature confers on every object only one power, never two at once, otherwise she would be unjust, and that she cannot be. This power once put in action,

nothing can possibly increase or diminish it. If you assume that the earth moves round it's axis, this is in itself a power, and consequently it cannot at the same time also move round the sun; but, if you assume that the sun moves round the earth, the latter then does not move round it's axis." — "According to this doctrine," said I, "nature has consequently only conferred upon the earth the power of standing still!" — "Right! We Persians maintain that. You ascribe that power to the sun, and you are wrong. Every thing has been created for the satisfaction of man and of the Shah; we stand with the earth in the center, and look on with gratitude and admiration."

The astrologer here shut his book, and said that these things belonged to the higher order of the contemplative sciences, and that the mind must be a little spared for some future occasion. In the mean time he would talk of lighter subjects, such as mathematics. He then showed me how to measure the distances of objects from

each other on the other side of a river, (on which the minister interrupted him, by assuring me that the King had once charged him with a commission of that nature, which he had executed wonderfully well,) and how to ascertain the height of any given object from a distance, &c. But I rather disconcerted him by observing that these were trifles which little children in Europe learned in the first lessons of geometry. I began to go through a trigonometrical problem; but of this he understood nothing, nor did he seem to have any conception of logarithms.

Before the conference broke up, I was obliged to give the astonished gentlemen some account of my voyage round the world, of which two things appeared to them to be impossible; — that I had once been with their antipodes, and that there were finer countries in the world than Persia.

The minister returned thanks for the agreeable conversation, ordered refresh-

ments to be offered to us, begged me to visit him often; and we parted very good friends with the fat astrologer. I had only one subsequent audience of the minister, in which I showed him the use of the slate and pencil, of which they have no notion in Persia, and which greatly pleased him. He was still more astonished when I assured him that similar slates were to be found in the country in abundance.

The 19th of July. — Reports of artillery announced, at last, the arrival of the King at Sultanie. Several gentlemen, who happened to be there at the time, witnessed His Majesty's entrance.

The road from the castle was lined, for the extent of a mile, with double files of regular infantry, between which the procession marched in the following order:

An elephant carrying a splendid baldaquin.

Fifty camels, with musicians wearing red

pointed caps: their instruments consisted of kettle-drums and long trumpets.

Five hundred camels carrying small cannons, and decked out with flags.

A flying battery of eighteen pieces of artillery.

Twenty richly caparisoned saddle horses.

Forty running footmen, wearing on their heads caps like crowns, and ornamented with plumes of different colours.

The King, simply dressed, but mounted on a horse having trappings richly ornamented with diamonds. Nobody followed him within an hundred yards.

Seventeen sons of His Majesty in splendid dresses, and mounted on very handsome horses. The attention of the spectators was particularly attracted by Mahmet-Ali-Mirza, who had joined his father with 15,000 cavalry, which closed the procession.

The King observed several gentlemen of the Embassy, upon which they respectfully uncovered themselves, when His Majesty, rising gently in his stirrups, exclaimed se-

veral times, Koshkildi! (welcome.) The Persians assured us that His Majesty had never yet done a similar honour to any body.

On the arrival of the King at the castle, a camel was slaughtered, according to the custom of Persia: when he dismounted from his horse, a volley was fired from five hundred small field-pieces, and the head of the camel was laid at his feet. He immediately came forward in the open hall of the palace, and upon seating himself, the artillery was again discharged. In consequence of his arrival at Sultanie, the whole surrounding country was covered with a vast encampment, the tents being so much crowded, that only three or four outlets were left in it.

Between the castle and the place destined for our own encampment, a space of about four wersts and a half had been kept open; and it was the only unoccupied ground in the whole camp. Merchants from all quarters had received orders to repair to Sultanie, and close to our encampment a large

bazar was established, in which, however, as we subsequently found, there was nothing worth purchasing.

The King had sent several times to enquire after the health of the Ambassador, and to express his concern that the festival of the Ramasan precluded him from making his personal acquaintance. The observance of these fasts ends with the new moon of this month, viz. the 31st of July.

On the 26th, His Majesty dispatched Safir-Chan to conduct the Embassy to the encampment at Sultanie, which had been finished for our reception; and after waiting till the heat of the day was over, we departed from Samanarchie at three o'clock in the afternoon, in the following order:

A detachment of Cossacks.

The Marshal, with two assistants.

The band of music.

Six officers of the general staff.

Two feldjägers, accompanied by messengers of the Senate.

The Ambassador, mounted on a richly

caparisoned horse, which the King had sent to him.

Two Councillors of Embassy.

The whole suite of the Ambassador;

And another detachment of Cossacks.

The wind raised a dreadful cloud of dust, which completely covered us. Safir-Chan made apologies for the disagreeable state of the weather; but our torments were increased when, within half a day's march from Sultanie, our cavalcade was joined by the Vali of Kurdistan*, who advanced at the head of several thousand Kurdins to welcome the Ambassador. These men were much better equipped, and more expert horsemen, than those whom we had seen at Erivan and Tauris. Many of them were finely arrayed in coats of mail, and had all the appearance of ancient knights: they were mounted on Arab horses, and provided with lances. Some of them wore on their

* Formerly Sovereign Prince of Kurdistan, now a vassal of the King, and particularly devoted to His Majesty's eldest son. —*Author.*

helmets a number of plumes, each of which, it was said, had been granted to them in return for an enemy's head. I counted as many as five on some horsemen. It is curious that the horses share in the honours of their riders, and carry as many feathers as the latter. However fine, under any other circumstances, the sight of these men might have been, we now heartily wished them at the devil. The heat was intolerable: they formed a narrow circle round us, and raised a cloud of dust so thick, that the wind had not the power to disperse it. At last we got rid of them at the bazar; it's entrance not being wide enough to admit them.

The King and his court looked on from the castle. On our dismounting before a large tent, which had been prepared as an audience-chamber, the Persian guard of three hundred men presented arms, and we hoisted the Russian eagle. Refreshments had been prepared for us in the tent, and after partaking of them, Safir-Chan proceeded to announce our arrival to the King.

Our camp consisted of sixteen large, and a number of smaller tents; three or four persons residing in each. Colonel Iwanoff, Dr. Müller, M. de Rennenkampff, and myself, had nitherto been inseparable fellow-lodgers, but here Rennenkampff was unfaithful to his old messmates, who took up their abode by themselves. Besides a tent, the Ambassador had a kibitke, which he had brought from Tiflis, and which, being lined with oil-skin, was the only place protected from the wind and dust, which penetrated the other tents so completely, that we found it necessary to sweep them out several times during the day.

In the middle of the camp there were three large tents, containing the presents, which made such a fine display, that we were reminded of a St. Petersburgh *hermitage.** These tents became our favourite place of recreation; and we lost a most

* The author alludes to a rural pavilion at which various entertainments are given by the Russian court.—*Translator.*

agreeable pastime when they were given up to the King.

The presents consisted of the following articles:

A large complete service of cut-glass.

A service of the finest porcelain, from the manufactory of St. Petersburgh, adorned with paintings of the costumes of all the different nations subject to the Russian crown; together with views taken from the vicinity of St. Petersburgh, and of the adjoining castles. To this service belonged two porcelain vases, which were real masterpieces.

A tray of cut-glass, three feet six inches in length.

Several kallions of cut-glass.

A toilette mirror, of one piece, three yards in length, with candelabres, supported by two bronze figures of angels. The Persians were greatly surprised to see these figures, and enquired whether there were, in our country, people who had wings.

A lady's toilette, in the form of a pyra-

mid, made of all the various species of woods that are found in Russia, in their natural colours. This article was very deserving of admiration, both for it's taste and workmanship. Inside there was a piece of mechanism, by which knitting and twisting were performed, without manual assistance.

A clock, in the form of a gold elephant, which moved it's trunk, ears, and eyes. The pedestal, set round with diamonds, contained landscapes, with moving figures.

Tula guns, pistols, and sabres, of the finest workmanship.

Two pier-glasses, each of one piece, nearly twelve feet high.

A gold kallion.

Three daggers, ornamented with diamonds.

Diamond snuff-boxes, rings, and a number of watches.

Two furs of black sable, each valued at 30,000 roubles; and a number of others less costly.

Three diamond plumes, of exquisite workmanship.

Two gold telescopes, ornamented with diamonds.

An immense quantity of gold and silver stuffs, cloth, &c.

It was indeed an Imperial present! Several distinguished Persians to whom the presents were shown, were perfectly transported, and would not leave the tents. Glass has, in the estimation of this people, a particular value; and as they never have an opportunity of seeing any other articles of glass than their kallions, they certainly must have been struck with delight by the sight of a splendid service of crystal glittering with the brilliancy of diamonds.

The next day we had a view of the whole camp, which lay huddled together in the greatest confusion, affording altogether a singular but not an agreeable sight. The bazar formed a straight avenue between the castle and our camp. Each merchant had a miserable little tent, in which stood a box

containing all his riches, and upon which he sat, ate, and slept. This bazar, therefore, was altogether wretched; and in order to complete the purchase of five yards of cloth, it became necessary to summon a meeting of five merchants. The view of the whole was dull and uniform; for, excepting the castle and an old metshet, we could see nothing but the tops of the tents, which produced an appearance like that of an immense white field.

The second day after our arrival the Ambassador visited the Prime Minister, Mirza-Jeffi, who immediately returned the compliment, accompanied by a number of Chans, among whom was the former Ambassador at the Court of St. Petersburgh, Mirza-Avdulasan-Chan.* The gentlemen of the Embassy were individually presented to the Minister. His Excellency is eighty years of age, and of small stature. His voice sounds as if it issued from the grave. He

* The present Ambassador to the court of Great Britain.—*Translator.*

is vain, rouges, and affects an effeminate elegance of manners. But he is really a phenomenon in other respects, for he has filled the station of Prime Minister during the last forty-five years. He said that, notwithstanding his arduous occupations, the administration of the government under a Prince like the present King, was a delight, and by no means too much for his advanced age: the predecessor of His Majesty, on the contrary, Aga-Mahmed-Chan, an eunuch, had frequently plagued him so much that he had, notwithstanding the unbounded love he bore to his country, been often on the point of retiring from his office, and even from Persia. We could have no difficulty in believing His Excellency, for the treatment which he experienced from his former master was truly barbarous.

Aga-Mahmed-Chan was an eunuch, who, by a successful conspiracy, unlawfully obtained possession of the throne; and in order to maintain it, committed every ima-

ginable act of cruelty. His condition may have contributed to increase his natural hatred of mankind. Determined to be dissatisfied, he sometimes placed confidence, indiscriminately, in all; sometimes in none, and in the end distrusted even himself. Addicted to drinking, he would forget tomorrow the orders which he had given today; and he roared like a maniac at the sight of the unfortunate beings, frequently his own favourites, whom he had commanded to be sacrificed. It is not surprising that with such a character he should have united the passion of war, which yet he conducted disgracefully. He was finally murdered by his own guards.

Mirza-Jeffi was long the prime minister of this monster. He was obliged to be constantly near his person, and rarely escaped humiliation or insult, of which the following anecdote affords a decisive instance. The minister had the daily task of taking minutes of the orders of the tyrant, which the latter dictated while stretched out on a

carpet. If he was in a bad humour, he would generally add expressions personally disrespectful to the minister; and on one occasion, while probably intoxicated, he reproved Mirza-Jeffi, who sat writing before him, by saying that he was continually plaguing him; that he left him no rest; that he found a pleasure in tormenting him, and in depriving him of sleep, &c.

The minister continued to write, till at last His Majesty's cushion flew at his head. The latter, half dead with terror, still proceeded in his writing: the diamond kallion followed the cushion: after that, every thing else within reach; and the tyrant concluded by firing a pistol at the object of his fury. The ball passed through the minister's beard, and lodged in his shoulder: he fell, and was carried away,—the Shah fell asleep. Several months elapsed before the minister recovered from his wound, and he could not, therefore, appear at court. In the mean time the Shah did

not once enquire after him, and when he got better, he returned to court and administered the government as usual.

On another occasion the bowstring was actually round his neck, when happily he produced an Alcoran, which he always carried about his person, and at the sight of the sacred book the Shah allowed him to escape.

Notwithstanding all this, the old minister said: "That had he accompanied Aga-Mahmed-Chan in his wars, he would certainly not have been murdered."

Persia has been continually exposed to wars and internal commotions. It can boast of three great men: Nadir-Shah, Abbas the Great, and the reigning Shah, Fet-Ali. The two first have extended the possessions of Persia, and raised the glory of her arms. Fet-Ali-Shah loves peace, and has the happiness of his people at heart.

The following curious anecdote is told illustrative of Shah-Nadir's determined character. After having concluded his con-

quests in the East, and penetrated across the Indus into Delhi, from whence he returned to Ispahan with the immense treasures of the Mogul, he thought of extending the western boundary of his kingdom, which the Turks had never ceased to molest. He instantly commenced his march, and was soon on the frontier, where he came to a large stone, which from time immemorial had borne the following inscription:

"Whichever of the two powers, Turkey "or Persia, shall seek to extend it's limits "at the expense of her neighbour, and first "pass this stone, shall be damned for "ever."

The Shah paused a little before this *stumbling stone;* but soon recovering from his surprise, he ordered that it should be placed in a large waggon, and carried before the army, until he had reached the limit of his projected conquests, where he directed it to be deposited.

At the conclusion of the minister's visit, he and his suite were conducted into the tents

where the presents were laid out. Struck with astonishment, they knew not on which article first to fix their attention. Pach! Pach! and Whoop! Whoop! exclamations of surprise and admiration, loudly resounded from every mouth. Moving about in all directions, and distracted by sensations of wonder and delight, they hurried from one object to another, without examining any, and finally left the tents as wise as they had entered them. There was only requisite the application of a few electrical shocks to complete the confusion. This scene created a great noise, and fame instantly commenced the work of exaggeration and romance. Some loitering people, who could only obtain an occasional glance through the apertures of the tents, fancied that they saw diamonds where there was only crystal; and it was circulated throughout the camp, that the Emperor of Russia had sent a service of diamonds to the Shah.

Captain Willock, the English chargé

d'affaires, accompanied by Dr. Campbell, came to visit the Ambassador.

The wind continued blowing violently every day, and raising clouds of dust which almost darkened the air. Whirlwinds came on also several times in the day, forming columns of dust, which nearly reached to the clouds, and rolling over the camp, tore up the tents. It was singular enough, that when one of these columns encountered an object offering resistance, the palace for instance, it divided into two parts, which again closed after passing the object, and pursued it's course. About a hundred muskets, which were ranged before our Persian piquet, were once thrown into a heap, and well shaken together, before the whirlwind had passed on.

Every morning and evening a gun was fired before the castle, as a signal that the fast had commenced, or that it had con-

cluded. On the expiration of the Ramasan this practice was discontinued.

In the mean time the King had frequently sent to enquire after the Ambassador's health; and at last fixed the 31st of July as the day on which he would grant his first audience.

At eleven o'clock in the morning, the regular Persian infantry, in red uniforms, were ranged in double file from the castle to our camp. Soon afterwards appeared the Deputy Adjutant-General Mahmud-Chan, accompanied by several officers of the court, wearing red shawls round their caps, and all provided with large canes. They proceeded to clear the way in the name of the King, removing every thing that might obstruct the passage of the procession. These people were called essauls. The Ambassador received Mahmud-Chan in the audience tent; and after mutual civilities, we commenced our march to the castle.

A beautiful charger, decked with trappings ornamented with gold and precious

stones, was, by command of the King, brought forward for the Ambassador's use, and, according to the custom of Persia, remained afterwards the property of His Excellency. A gold salver was destined for the presentation of the Emperor's letter to His Majesty. We proceeded in the same order which I have already described ; with this difference only, that a number of ambassadorial attendants, dressed in rich liveries, walked before the Ambassador's horse. The troops presented arms, and the drums beat.

As the King did not receive us in the castle, it is necessary that I should give some idea of the place. As has been already mentioned, the palace is surrounded by trees, which are planted in a row, at short distances. The space between the castle and the trees was drawn round with high red curtains *, and in a similar man-

* These curtains are called *saraperda*, and are of cotton stuff, generally coloured red. They are used in camps, in lieu of partitions, and mostly by Chans, or very rich personages, who carry their harems with them. —*Author.*

ner divided into two squares. In the second square stood the King's tent, in which he received the Embassy. At the entrance of the first square there was a tent, in which the Ambassador was received by the Adjutant-General and son-in-law of the King, Alajar-Chan, and some of the principal personages of the court. Chairs covered with red velvet had been expressly made for the Embassy. While the Ambassador was assuring Alajar-Chan that this was to all of us the happiest day of our lives, since we should see so powerful and great a monarch, tea, with rose-water, was carried round. Alajar-Chan then stood up, and said that the Shah was ready to receive the Ambassador. Excepting the two councillors of Embassy, one of whom carried the letter upon a gold salver, no other person accompanied His Excellency.

The Ambassador presented the letter to the King with his own hand, and made the following short speech:

"The Emperor of Russia, my august

" master, faithful to his principles, as well as
" his sentiments, honouring the distinguish-
" ed qualities which adorn your Majesty,
" and having at heart your glory, is desirous
" of establishing, on an everlasting found-
' ation, his peaceful relations with Persia,
" which owes it's prosperity to your Ma-
" jesty's government. I have the happiness
" to be honoured with the charge of de-
" claring to your Majesty the wishes of my
" master. That his wishes are sincere, God
" be my witness."

The councillor of state, Negri, read this address in the Turkish language, which the King takes delight in speaking almost constantly.

His Majesty requested the Ambassador to seat himself on a chair, which was placed opposite the throne; an honour which, as well as the permission to appear in boots, has never yet been shown to any other person.*

* Sir Harford Jones and Sir Gore Ouseley, the British Ministers, both sat in chairs opposite the King's throne. —*Translator.*

After waiting perhaps a quarter of an hour in the outer tent, Mahmud-Chan invited us to the audience. We passed through the door of the curtain, having an immense dragon painted on it, and entered the first court, which was lined with Persian soldiery and Kurdins. The door of the second court was guarded by a numerous body of men, among whom was one with a silver staff. On entering this, at the extremity of which stood the King's tent, it appeared to me as if the square was filled with soldiers; but this was merely the first impression, produced by paintings on the curtains; and there were only present some of the principal Chans, who were standing in two rows, exposed to a dreadful sun. From the door to the tent the distance was about an hundred yards. At one-third of that length the Adjutant-General stopped, and made a profound bow; at two-thirds of the distance he left his slippers, and made another bow (we only bowed); and when he had gone over the whole length,

he stood still, and bowing again, cried aloud:—

"The suite of the Russian Ambassador "wishes to have the happiness to be allow- "ed to approach the dust of your Majesty's "feet. Your Majesty's commands?"

The King slowly turned his face towards us, and exclaimed, Hoshkeldi! Hoshkeldi! upon which we uncovered ourselves, and entered the tent.

The Ambassador rose from his seat, and begged His Majesty's permission to be allowed to present the members of the Embassy personally. The King consented; he enquired after our health, and asked whether we had experienced any inconvenience from so long a journey. On being respectively named, we stepped forward, and bowed three times to the King, upon which he generally exclaimed Hoshkeldi!

When it came to my turn, the Ambassador said: "He has been round the world, and now comes to Persia, for the sole purpose of having the happiness of seeing your

Majesty."—"I wish him joy," said the King, "he has now seen every thing."

He spoke of his friendship with the Emperor, and assured us that we might consider ourselves as being in his service; and he hoped that we would serve him as faithfully as we should serve our own Emperor. To Dr. Muller he said, "You are now my physician."

He mentioned the custom which now prevails among the Sovereigns of Europe, of visiting each other. "I should be glad," he said, "if the Emperor of Russia would come and visit me: I should certainly go and meet him."

The manners and behaviour of the King are so engaging and amiable, that we might well say, without flattery, he is the only man fit to be Shah in Persia! Continually surrounded by courtiers, who, in point of manners and understanding, are mere dolts compared to him, it is difficult to imagine how his mind can retain so much freshness and vigour.

His Majesty is of a middle stature; of his face nothing is seen but two large fine eyes; the rest is concealed by his beard, which hangs down to his knees. It is said to be the finest in Persia, and it is invoked on all occasions calling for the most sacred testimony.

He sat upon a golden throne, richly ornamented with real stones. It was shaped like one of our old-fashioned chairs. On the first step there was worked a bas relief of a tiger in gold.

His dress was of gold stuff, with the addition of a shawl. The crown increased in breadth towards the summit, and was surmounted by three diamond plumes. On his arms, where every Persian carries his Alcoran, there were two diamonds well known in Europe, surrounded by others of very large sizes. His dagger and his girdle were profusely studded with stones and pearls.

The tent was hung with red silk, and on the right of the throne His Majesty's seven-

teen sons stood ranged against the curtain: they were the only persons who shared the honours of the audience with us. Immediately adjoining the throne, was a handsome youth, said to be a nephew of the King, who stood in waiting near a carpet worked with genuine pearls, and upon which lay a round cushion, with tassels adorned with pearls of an enormous size. Upon this carpet stood the great kallion, which is crowded with large brilliants; and a cup, which appeared to be formed of a single stone. Immediately before the tent stood three officers, the first bearing a crown upon a cushion richly embroidered; the second a sabre, and the third a shield, which, from the number of precious stones with which it is ornamented, formed one of the most valuable articles of the royal treasure. From this short description it may be seen that the value of single articles is immense; but I must confess that, upon the whole, there was no appearance of that Asiatic magnificence which has been so highly extolled by European travellers.

At the conclusion of the audience the prime minister was allowed to come into the tent, where he stood next to the members of the Embassy. The King, in a loud voice, said much to him in praise of the Ambassador, and particularly mentioned His Excellency's delicacy in rising from his seat every time that he addressed him. This convinced His Majesty that if His Excellency knew how to assert his rights, he also showed much good taste in the exercise of them.

The King dismissed us very graciously, and commanded the prime minister to see that the Embassy were provided with every thing which they could want. We returned as we had come, making three bows in the court, where the Adjutant-General resumed his slippers at the place where he had left them. Mahmud-Chan accompanied us home, where the Ambassador justly expatiated on the noble qualities of the Shah, respecting whom we learnt that he was also the first poet of his nation.

As during the Ramasan * the Moslems are forbidden to allow themselves any recreation whatever, the King would not look at the presents, until this festival was over. On the day preceding its conclusion, he ordered a large tent to be erected close to the audience-tent, and all the presents were conveyed there. While this operation was going forward, His Majesty looked on from the castle, and sent several times to thank us for the exertion and care with which the proceeding was conducted. But we viewed with regret the destruction of our *hermitage*, which had afforded us so much amusement.

* The Persians have four Ramasans in the course of the year, which they keep very conscientiously. The most severe is that which precedes the new year, corresponding to the 10th of March, Old Style. On this day the King receives numberless presents from every province, and distributes in return new coins to all the principal personages of the state, and to the people. — *Author.*

On the same evening, the whole camp was in a bustle. Every creature raised his hands towards heaven to greet the new moon, which instantly absolved him who saw it from all further observance of the fast. The following day was a great festival. Early in the morning, all the troops assembled round the castle, and the Ambassador, accompanied only by the Councillor of State, Negri, attended the King, with whom he appeared on the open side of the palace. A battery of twenty-nine pieces of artillery immediately fired three rounds. While the Ambassador was conversing with His Majesty, the Persian music played; it consisted of some dozen immensely long trumpets, and about twenty drums.* Two dancers performed, with some skill, on a rope which was drawn from the square to the top of the

* This music assembled every evening at sunset before the castle, and set up a dreadfully discordant noise. This is a distinction which is only shared with the King by His Majesty's sons and the commanders of provinces. — *Author.*

castle, over the audience-chamber. Three elephants were then brought forward. The King's sons, and the principal chans, stood in the court, exposed to the burning rays of the sun, happy when His Majesty deigned to honour them with a look or a word. At last he requested the Ambassador to show him the presents in half an hour, as it was then the time for going to prayers. His Excellency accordingly took his leave, and proceeded to the tent where the presents were laid out.

His Majesty now came, and, perhaps for the first time in his life, saw a full length reflection of his own figure. "These mirrors," said he, "are dearer to me than all my treasures." Continual exclamations of Pach! pach! and Whoop! whoop! again resounded throughout the tent whenever he touched any article. The service of cut glass pleased him exceedingly. He desired almost every article to be presented to him separately, enquired where each had been made, and always said that it pleased him

more than all his treasures. The Ambassador observed that the treasures of Persia were too well known in Europe to render it possible to surprize His Majesty by the magnificence of the Imperial present; but these articles were all the produce of Russian manufactories with which, by these specimens, the Emperor was desirous of making His Majesty acquainted. "They are far dearer to me than all my treasures!" he again exclaimed.

He spoke with much graceful ease, and showed that he knew how to appreciate each article. He took up a beautiful goblet of cut glass, and said to His Excellency, "Truly this glass is so fine that it might seduce me to drink wine!"

The superintendant of the presents was allowed to present every article into his own hands; an honour which is never extended to any person but the prime minister, — which affords another proof that the King is proud only when the cus-

toms of his country require that he should be so.

The sable furs excited his admiration to such a degree that he doubted at first whether they were not dyed; a hesitation which created no surprize, since those worn even by the most opulent chans were reddish. When the Ambassador had convinced him that the colour was natural, adding that the Emperor had selected them himself, he suddenly laid his hand on the furs, and resting it there, said, "I wish that my hand may happen to touch the place where that of the Emperor has rested: my friendship is sincere, and lasts for ever."

He took a pleasure in looking frequently in the mirrors, and at last said, smilingly, "These will make me vain of my person." He desired that the machinery of the elephant might be put in motion, and admired its mechanism. He praised the costume of the Russian ladies, and was in such good spirits, and so lively, that he sent orders to his principal officers throughout the

camp, " to come and admire the presents which the great Emperor had sent to his friend the great Shah ;" and he commanded the minister instantly to dispatch a courier to Teheran, with orders to build a saloon expressly for the reception of the presents ; adding, " He who shall be the first to bring intelligence of their safe arrival, shall receive a reward of one thousand tumanes ; but he who disregards my commands, shall be answerable for his neglect with his head."

His Majesty passed the night with his harem *, near the presents ; and on the next morning directed that they should be immediately packed up, and sent to Teheran without delay. He requested that the person under whose charge they had been brought from St. Petersburgh, might be allowed to accompany them to Teheran, to superintend the disposal of them. He sent daily to enquire whether they were packed up ; and when every thing was at last ready

* He had brought *only* sixty women with him. — *Author.*

for the journey, it was by some trick of his astrologers postponed for three days. Even when the long expected day had arrived, these gentlemen insisted that the convoy should set off in a direction opposite to that of the road leading to Teheran; asserting that the happy star, under which this journey had been determined on, had taken that course.

One afternoon I witnessed a singular diversion which the King was taking. A sheep, bound so that it could not move, lay at a great distance from the balcony of the palace, and His Majesty, as well as some of his children, were shooting arrows at the unfortunate animal. None hit it so well as he did. One of his sons, a beautiful little boy, was standing by him, and learning from his father the use of the bow.

His Majesty went out shooting every day, and always sent to the Ambassador game which he had killed with his own hand. Fruit was likewise brought to us in large quantities, but mostly unripe.

The Persians are highly skilled in the art of procuring ice in the hottest weather. They have no ice-houses, and I have no notion how they get it.

We had music every evening in front of our encampment, and the Persians assembled in great numbers to hear it. The King's band performed at the same time, and they produced together a singular uproar.

The Persian infantry was constantly drilled the whole of the day in front of our camp ; but they cannot be compared with the troops at Tauris.

The sentries, who were posted in our camp, used to give one another their arms whenever they wanted to go any where, and not unfrequently one soldier was seen holding several musquets. They, besides, often abused their authority, by stopping and plundering individuals, who, ignorant of their countersign, attempted to pass through the camp, and we were continually called out of our tents, to see that the property of these persons was restored to them.

These poor devils had, however, a hard service to perform: their officers frequently forgot them, and left them on their post the whole of the day; yet many of the sentries, who had not thoroughly profited by European discipline, would go and give their officers a hint when it was time they should be relieved.

The small field-piece, which is carried on a camel, is a peculiar kind of gun. The officer who commanded this arm of the service, a meritorious old soldier, on several occasions manœuvred some hundreds of them in our presence. The guns are so light that an artillery-man can take his piece on his back, and run about with it. They do not attempt to take aim in firing: the gun lies on the ground, and is fired at random. They are never discharged but in vollies, which are very powerful, and may do much execution, from their number. With some improvements, they might be used with advantage by the advanced guard of an army. The colonel assured us that

he would match his corps against a whole army. The men are clothed like the Bajazzoes, and wear caps with red feathers.

The whole of the infantry were also manœuvred several times, and performed the running fire particularly well.

Of the ancient ruins of the city of Sultanie, which is said to have been flourishing and populous in the times of Chardin, there now remain only three Metshets, one of which is particularly distinguished for its magnitude and beauty. It is an octagonal tower, surmounted by a dome, which is a masterpiece of architecture. The whole building may be about forty yards broad, and eighty in height. The inside is ornamented with hieroglyphics; and in the upper part of the building there is a number of small chambers and passages, formerly leading to four small pillars which surrounded the dome: but of these there is only one now remaining, which has a winding stair-

case inside of it, and the top of which is on a level with the summit of the cupola.

The other ruins are ugly masses of loam, which have been washed by the rain into such singular shapes, that an European can scarcely consider them as the remains of dwelling houses.

Not far from thence there is a small place, encircled by a handsome wall, which is now about to be transformed into a garden. In the middle stands a building, containing the remains of the Saint Hassain-Kashi. The whole has been erected by the present Shah, who, during his residence at Sultanie, frequently proceeds to this place to perform his devotions in solitude. There is no trace of Christianity in the whole neighbourhood, as asserted by the Armenians; although some of these people, who are now scattered over Persia, like the Jews over Europe, may have formerly resided there.

We have as yet seen no trace of the far-famed magnificence of Asia. The houses

as well as the tents are fitted up in the plainest style; and, excepting some handsome carpets found here and there, we saw literally nothing to attract our attention. A Persian gentleman makes some show in his dress: he has a few fine shawls, a sabre, and a dagger, which he inherited from his father; and the trappings of his horse are of gold; but he possesses nothing else, and his servants are almost in rags. Even the attendants of a minister are clothed like beggars. Our ideas of splendor are formed from the general style of a man's house, and his mode of living; but the highest degree of Asiatic grandeur has no reference whatever to domestic state; and I am disposed to think that the false notions which prevail in Europe, relative to eastern magnificence, have been inherited from our ancestors, who imbibed them in times before any progress had been made in civilization.

The treasure of the King is extremely valuable, but entirely without taste. Some few great personages are very rich, but the

rest are wretchedly poor. It cannot, indeed, be otherwise, for in this country they have no conception how a sum of money can bear interest, without a diminution of the capital. There is no exchange of money. Neither the constitution of the state nor their ideas of honesty permit the introduction of another system. The consequence is, that the rich man hoards his money, and eats it up by degrees, unless he has the prospect of acquiring more; but if he live longer than he had calculated upon, he goes to his grave a beggar.

The fear of outliving his capital, renders a Persian disgustingly avaricious. Those who serve the government hoard their pay, in order that they may not be exposed to want hereafter; and the ministers act upon the same principle, because they cannot be certain how long they may remain in favor.

The King himself possesses an immense dead treasure, which he withholds from a beneficial circulation among his people, and from which his subjects derive no re-

urn, except in time of war. If the industry of the landholders were not cramped by the religion of the country, their lot might be said to be happier than that of their fellow-subjects, for they are the only class who draw interest from their capital.

There exists a singular notion that it is the custom of the Persians immediately to give away to a person any article that he may have praised. This idea, however, has solely arisen from a literal interpretation of their phraseology of civility, and the custom is about equal to the assurance with which they generally receive a guest,—that the whole house belongs to him; meaning thereby, in reality, nothing more than we do when in writing to any one we add that we are his most humble servant, without any intention of becoming such. Yet the custom of presenting articles that have been praised by another person sometimes prevails in cases where they can be easily spared, and then only when the donors feel sure of receiving double the value in

return; for a counterpresent cannot be avoided. It is also the custom of the country to make considerable presents to servants, almost on every trifling occasion. People are in the habit of sending each other a flower, an apple, and so forth; and these must always be repaid by their weight in gold. The expences of a traveller in Persia are, therefore, truly alarming; and some idea may be formed of the daily expenditure of an embassy under this single head.

The King had hitherto been in the habit of immediately allowing a settled sum of money to all Europeans who appeared at his Court, under the name of "bath-money." * But the Ambassador begged to decline accepting it, declaring that it was

* These bathing-allowances must have been offered to the Russian Embassy, either as a fair compensation for the trouble they must have had in cleaning themselves after their very dusty journey, or as one of those "exclusive honours" of which the author is very fond of boasting, and we allow him to enjoy it. — *Translator.*

not the usage of our country to accept pecuniary presents from any other person than the Sovereign. It was some time before the Persians could be made to conceive that there existed a distinction between one species of present and another. Their functionaries, who like nothing so much as money, were soon forced also to refuse pecuniary gifts, which the Ambassador, however, was under the necessity of replacing by presents of other descriptions.

The negociations continued to advance with rapid progress. The Ambassador had frequent audiences of the King and his ministers, who all, and His Majesty in particular, became so attached to His Excellency that they wished that he might remain in Persia, and they said they would ask the Emperor to do them the favour of consenting to this arrangement.

On one occasion, when His Excellency proceeded to attend the King, I happened to be officer of the day, and had accordingly to accompany him. We went to

the great terrace of the castle, where His Excellency was received in a tent, by the Prime Minister, and the Adjutant-General, Alajar-Chan. The King immediately appeared on his throne. The Adjutant-General conducted the Ambassador into the audience-chamber while I remained with the Minister, who pressed me to be seated. There appeared below, before the castle, several thousand Kurdins, who, on being called, by name, into the presence of the King, started at full gallop out of the ranks, bowing profoundly at the same time. The Minister repeatedly asked me how I liked the cavalry; and I gave it that tribute of praise to which I thought it was, upon the whole, entitled. "Yes," said he, "and our horsemen do not fight as your European cavalry do, standing all together: the bravery of our troops consists in this, that each man fights for himself. With you, bravery is an art." I had no wish to undeceive the old gentleman, and merely referred to the advantage resulting from fighting in ranks.

"Ha! You Europeans," said he, "are always starting some new improvement;" the Turks, however, he thought, "had no-thing to boast of but their wide trowsers."

The Turks are held in such small estimation in this country, that the King himself once said, "To be a Turk is to be nothing at all." The minister also mentioned to me an affair (without date, however,) in which 500 Persians, having no other weapons than sticks, totally defeated several thousand Turks.

When the review was ended, the Master of the Horse came forward, standing upon a wild Arabian, and turned himself round while the horse was bounding about in every direction at full speed, not in the measured canter of our riding-schools. Sometimes he would suspend himself by either foot, while his head and arms hung down to the ground; and then swinging himself on the horse, he would stand in the saddle upon both legs or one; in short he went through

a great variety of feats, the sight of which was really alarming.

This man's performances certainly surpassed any thing of the kind that I had ever witnessed in my own country; and when the minister asked my opinion of them, I assured him that we had nothing equal to them in Europe. "And yet," added he, "that is not our best tumbler; the best is sick." I did not, however, give much credit to this assertion; and I learnt afterwards that this man was the only performer at the King's court, and indeed superior to any in Persia.

The Ambassador soon afterwards made his appearance, and proceeded to wait upon the King's eldest son, Mahmud-Ali-Mirza, who gave His Excellency a most gracious reception, and spoke highly in praise of His Majesty.

Among the troops who were still assembled before the castle, two men began quarrelling in the King's presence, and struck

their daggers at one another. Under other circumstances such audacious conduct would have been punished with instant death; but His Majesty pardoned them, saying, "The presence of the Russian Embassy shall not be violated by the shedding of blood: there shall be joy only among us." This was no mean proof of instantaneous subjugation of feeling on the part of an unlimited monarch, accustomed to punish, on the spot, with death, offences of a far more trivial nature.

The Prime Minister invited the whole Embassy to dinner, to which we proceeded at the hour of five in the afternoon. We found chairs prepared for us in the tent, and upon being seated, tea with rose-water and kallions were offered to us; the whole of the Minister's attendants in the mean time, according to Persian custom, standing round and gaping at us.

Soon afterwards we went into another tent, in the middle of which a mound of earth had been raised as a substitute for a

table, but so very high, that we could but just see the noses of those who sat opposite to us. This table, which was of immense breadth, was covered with different sorts of dishes and fruits. In the middle, a small narrow space had been left open; and I could not imagine for what purpose, until, when we were seated, I saw the servants jump upon the table, and stand there, handing round such dishes as might be agreeable to us. I would have given much to have been allowed to laugh heartily; but we were obliged to repress our feelings of ridicule. One of the men, however, having stepped into a dish of sour milk, and his neighbour having, in the attempt to relieve him, nearly fallen over another dish, it was no longer possible to refrain from laughing; and luckily the conversation of the Ambassador and of the Minister, who had observed nothing of the fracas, having at the moment turned upon a circumstance in itself ridiculous, our laughing could excite no particular observation. The careless servant

modestly withdrew, leaving marks of his footsteps on the table. Besides this awkward mode of waiting, which must have been painful to the servants, others had to stand behind us, and keep the flies off with large straw fans.

I expected to have realized, at the Minister's table, the hope which I still indulged of eating good fruit in Persia; but it was very bad.

The Minister sent to several gentlemen "*bonnes bouches*" from his own plate, which is considered the greatest honour that he can show to a guest; but with the Persians that degree of ceremony is dispensed with: he throws the food at once into their mouths, and they show much dexterity in catching it. If a great man should happen to take a liking to his neighbour, he nicely kneads a portion of greasy rice with three fingers into a lump, and with a condescending smile conveys it into the mouth opened to receive the honour.

On rising from table, water was brought, in order that we might wash our hands: we then returned to the first tent, where kallions and coffee were handed round. There was now an end of the entertainment, as far as we were concerned; but hundreds of persons, who had in the mean time been, according to custom, lying in wait for the remains of the feast, began to demolish them as soon as we had dined.

On the following day another dinner was given to the Embassy by the Treasurer of the kingdom, Nisamut-Dewle, governor of Ispahan, and one of the richest private individuals in Persia: he makes an annual present of twenty pounds weight of genuine pearls to the King. Some of the table utensils were of gold; and there was good Ispahan wine. Shiraz wine is extremely scarce in Persia, among other reasons, because very little of it is made; a fact which must be extremely edifying to those gentlemen in Europe who imagine that they drink genuine Shiraz.

The Ambassador returned these civilities by inviting all the satraps to an entertainment. Our camp was beautifully illuminated on the occasion: the guests all sat at table, and the members of the Embassy did the honours, in a manner which seemed to gratify them. The Prime Minister, who might have heard something of the story of his awkward servant's foot-bath, praised our custom of sitting at table, and declared that he was so much delighted with it, that he would adopt the practice himself at Teheran. The band played, and the Persian camp collected in crowds round us the whole night. The King sent from his harem a quantity of fruit, with a complimentary message to the Ambassador.

A few days afterwards, the King invited the Embassy to an exhibition of fire-works. At four o'clock in the afternoon all the troops assembled round the castle, together with the camel-artillery, which was on this occasion dismounted. His Majesty, desirous of hearing our music, had requested that

the band might also be present. The Ambassador attended the King in the audience-hall, while we stood on the terrace. Below were the two orchestras, Russian and Persian, which mutually relieved each other, and produced the strangest compound of sounds. Between them five little boys, dancers of the court, were capering about to the music of the orchestra. The two rope-dancers were also present. At some distance, the preparations for the fire-works occupied a square space, of about one thousand yards. In the middle stood, between two elephants, a large figure representing the giant Rustan. The other objects were pyramids, fruit-trees, together with an immense number of fountains and rockets.

Lest there should not be a sufficient number of engines of sound, the space was surrounded by the camel-artillery, and a battery of heavy guns occupied the remainder of the ground. The King was much pleased with our music; and having dismissed the men with presents, retired to his

harem, charging the Prime Minister and the Adjutant-General to do the honours of the fête in his absence.

Fruit, tea, and kallions were carried round, while the Persian music played, and the dancers went through their disgusting performances. This noise lasted until dark, upon which the business of the fireworks commenced. Some rockets went up in good style; the artillery fired seldom at first; now and then fountains, wheels, &c. whizzed off. But this was not to the taste of the Persians; they require that every thing should go off at once. This accordingly soon took place with tremendous reports of artillery, and I allow that the sight was truly superb, but regret that it lasted only for a moment. The whole atmosphere appeared to be in flames, and the earth shook. The flames died away in millions of sparks, which fell in showers on the ground, and the entertainment ended in silent darkness.

The painter of the Embassy had made from memory a tolerably good likeness of the King, whom he had seen only at the first audience, and he had presented his work to the minister Avdul-Vehab, who showed it to His Majesty. The latter immediately expressed a desire to sit for his picture, and sent for the artist, to whom he showed two portraits of himself, which he thought good likenesses, and he desired to be painted in the same style. This was very natural, for the artist had flattered him in both instances. In short, the Shah did what he had never done before ; he placed himself on his throne, assumed an easy attitude, saying to the artist, "You must "paint me twice: one portrait I shall keep "for myself, the other shall be for Eu-"rope."

The King sent also for our grenadiers, and desired that they might be paraded before him, after which he dismissed them with presents.

One day His Majesty took the diversion of shooting, having previously directed the Adjutant-General to show us his curiosities. We were accordingly received by Alajar-Chan at the palace, and conducted into the jewel chamber. We there saw the throne of gold inlaid with large stones; the beautiful carpet worked with pearls, the cushion that belonged to it, and the diamond kallion. Upon a large shawl-carpet there were two crowns, a cap with a plume of diamonds; four daggers, the handle of one of which was a solid emerald, two sabres, a girdle of diamonds, a string of pearls, particularly choice both in point of size and beauty, a great many lances, the famous shield, a bâton studded with diamonds, and three dresses profusely embroidered with pearls and brilliants.

Yet none of these articles were to be compared to a pair of bracelets, containing two diamonds, surrounded by others nearly as large. One of them is called *Dariainur* (the brilliant sea), and is worn by the King

on his left arm; the other, which bears the name of *Kuinur* (the brilliant mountain), is worn by His Majesty on his left leg. They are both diamonds of the first water; the Dariainur weighs 14 drachms, apothecaries' weight; and the Kuinur 9 drachms 20 grains. I state their weight, however, on the authority of the Treasurer, and will, therefore, not vouch for the correctness of the information. I should mention here, that we were taught to consider the sight of the royal treasure as an indulgence which the King had never before allowed to any stranger.*

On viewing all these treasures, one felt strongly impressed by the consideration, that many thousands of families might be made happy by that alone which lies unprofit-

* If the author had the caution to distrust the information given to him by the Persian Treasurer, surely he might have hesitated a little, before he claimed another exclusive honour to the Russian Embassy, on the authority of the Adjutant-General. Sir Gore Ouseley certainly saw the state-jewels. — *Translator.*

ably in this small chamber! It is said that these jewels were brought from India by Nadir Shah, who took them from the Mogul on the conquest of Delhi, together with that Prince's throne, the seat of which is the figure of a peacock, placed on a pedestal of solid gold, having three steps.

The peacock, as well as other valuable commodities, is still at Teheran; but the workmanship is very coarse, and inlaid with enamelled flowers, arranged without any taste.

The Adjutant-General, who showed the treasure to us, presented, in the name of the King, two full-length pictures of His Majesty. In one of them he is represented on his throne, and in the other he is sitting on his superb carpet. They are both tolerably well painted; the colours, in particular, are very fine, and the dresses and ornaments are most minutely copied; an accuracy of detail which is the particular characteristic of Asiatic painting.

With respect to painting, I find that Persia stands on the same level as China: in both countries there reigns the same taste for the gaudy display of variety of colours. In speaking of China, however, I must except Canton, where, with a view to supply the European market, painting is carried on with great assiduity. They manifest the greatest perseverance and ingenuity in preparing every description of articles, even card-counters, to catch the European trader; and I once saw there a painting in glass of the celebrated Madame Recamier.

As it is a custom of the Persians to show to the portraits of individuals, but particularly to that of the King, the same external marks of respect as to the persons themselves, the Ambassador directed that the pictures should be carried to the camp by the gentlemen of the Embassy, which was accordingly done, amidst the same honours on the part of the troops and of the people, as if the King had been actually present.

The negociations had now drawn to a happy close; and, without flattery to the Ambassador, I may say, that it was entirely owing to His Excellency's able and zealous exertions that, on the 27th of August, every point was finally adjusted, to the satisfaction of both powers; and the King appointed the afternoon of that day for our audience of leave.

The court of Persia never allows it's visitors to depart without bestowing presents upon them. These are generally given on the day of taking leave; and it is necessary to appear with them before the King. It is also the custom on this occasion to appear in the *khelaat* of honour*, which is included among the presents; but the Ambassador declared, that in our country it would be considered an insult to the

* A sort of cloak, which the King confers upon Chans as a particular mark of favour and distinction. It is made of stuff, and looks like a night-gown; but the people bow to it with reverence.—*Author.*

uniform of our sovereign, if we wore any other dress over it. His Majesty had the delicacy to yield in this instance also to our national notions of propriety; and he made, in favour of the Russian Embassy, the first, and perhaps the last, exception to the observance of this point of courtly etiquette. We therefore received no *khelaats;* and the stuff of which they were to have been prepared, was not made up. *

* Considerable credit must be allowed to the Persian negotiators for their success in having persuaded the Russian Embassy, that the government had shown it more distinction, and conceded a greater number of points of etiquette to it's head, General JERMOLOFF, than had been done in cases of former Embassies. It is, however, certain, that the last British Ambassador to the Court of Persia experienced to the full as distinguished a reception as the Russian Ambassador, and that as many points of etiquette were waved in his favour as are enumerated by the author. The privilege of wearing leather boots when treading on the carpet (which forms the usual seat, and often the table-cloth, of His Persian Majesty) was a point not insisted on by the British Minister, when he found that the King himself took off his shoes, whenever His Majesty came upon the carpet; for His Excellency considered that it was but fair and reasonable to take off the dirty boots or shoes in which

At eleven o'clock in the morning we were summoned to the audience-tent, to receive

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the members of the Embassy had either been riding or walking to the audience, and to change them for others of clean scarlet cloth; and he, therefore, readily conformed to a regulation founded on ideas of cleanliness and convenience, not meant as the exaction of a degrading mark of respect.

This important point of wearing leather boots, so triumphantly dwelt upon by the author, and which, perhaps, most of our readers may consider as one more "honoured in the breach than in the observance," was, however, attended with more disagreeable results to the gentlemen of the Russian Embassy than they have thought proper to notice. For instance, when Mirza-Jeffi invited the Russian Secretary of Embassy, with the aides-de-camp and attachés to dinner, and the English gentlemen to meet them, the Russians, being all *booted*, were not allowed to come upon the carpet on which the Prime Minister was sitting; and, consequently, they did not enter within the inner walls of the tent, but sat on chairs outside, whilst our countrymen, with cloth boots on, were seated close to the Prime Minister, on his carpet.

With respect to dresses of honour, it is certain that His Britannic Majesty's late Ambassador, neither at his first audience, nor on taking leave, nor in the very frequent interviews which he had with the King of Persia on business, ever wore any other dress than the

the King's presents. They were carried in slow procession from the palace. Several of

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Windsor uniform; and it is equally certain, that whenever he received His Excellency, he seated him, as has been already noticed, in a chair, if he was himself on the throne of state; or on a carpet near him, if His Majesty happened to be so seated.

In a preceding page it is stated by the author, that when the King made his entrance into Sultanie, His Majesty had welcomed some gentlemen of the Russian Embassy by rising in his stirrups, and exclaiming *Koshkildi*; and this is styled by the author an honour which the King had never before conferred upon any other person. It must not, however, be concealed from the reader, that the expression alluded to is nothing more than the common mode of salutation of the Sovereign of Persia to all his subjects.

But, as has been already observed, the Persians very probably represented to the members of the Embassy, that every mark of distinction shown to the Russian gentlemen was exclusively granted to them, although they would equally have endeavoured to convince the English, or the French had they been there, that they were severally honoured with the highest marks of respect ever bestowed; and it may, therefore, be fairly inferred, that the narrative conveys, with *bonne foi*, the estimate which the Russians formed of their reception, and with which it was the interest of the Persians to impress them.—*Translator.*

the principal Chans led the way, followed by a number of men carrying on their heads the trays containing the presents, which were covered with white cloths.

The people bowed respectfully, as they do to every thing that comes from the King. Some gentlemen of the Embassy advanced to receive the procession, and upon reaching the tent the trays were set down.

One of the Chans informed the Ambassador that the King sent these presents to the whole mission, as tokens of his regard, and in remembrance of Persia. On each present lay a ticket, containing a description of the article, and the name of the person for whom it was intended.

Besides several costly presents, the Ambassador received the decoration of the first class of the Order of the Sun and Lion, several of us that of the second class, and some of the third.

The presents were very trifling; for, with the exception of the two Councillors of the

Embassy, each gentleman received only a shawl and two pieces of stuff. The shawls were mostly in holes, and patched. Indeed it would be very desirable that the King should know how shamefully he is deceived, on these occasions, by his officers who are in the habit of substituting in lieu of His Majesty's gifts, other articles of inferior value. Thus, a shawl is changed five or six times, in passing from hand to hand, before it reaches the person for whom it was intended by the King!

At five o'clock in the afternoon we proceeded, in the order that has already been described, to the audience of leave. The place and the forms of introduction were the same as at our first presentation. The King was extremely gracious, and, with his usual condescension, assured us that we had all won his affection, and by our conduct acquired the regard of his people; and that he had himself, from the moment of our arrival, been foremost to form a very different opinion of the Russians. "I have not

known you until now, my dear neighbours," he exclaimed several times.

The Ambassador said that each of us was profoundly impressed with His Majesty's goodness, and that a reception so gracious from so great a monarch would for ever remain engraven on our grateful hearts. " Such is my wish," exclaimed the King, " we are now friends for ever. As you are the first who have given me so much satisfaction, and as you have performed a painful journey to come to me, I pray that my great friend, your Emperor, may reward you all. Thou," addressing the Ambassador, " hast particularly pleased me, and I beg thee to send me a couple of lustres from St. Petersburgh ; let them be large, and of the finest cut glass."

With his own hands he presented to the Ambassador a letter for the Emperor ; and in adding the solemn assurance of his sincere friendship, he appeared to be affectcd. His Excellency was also overcome by his feelings, and the King observed repeatedly

to his Prime Minister, that " the Ambassador must have a good heart."

A pause ensued, during which His Majesty appeared to struggle with his feelings, and he said at last, " I cannot bear to say farewell." The Ambassador then took his leave, the King exclaiming several times, " Koshkildi ! Koshamedi !" and continuing to follow us with looks of benevolence and affability until we had passed the man with the silver stick.

The Adjutant-General immediately came after us, and acquainted the Ambassador that it was customary, on such occasions, to ask a favour from the King, upon which His Excellency requested the promotion of Najar-Alibek and of Mamat-Alibek to the rank of Chans. His Majesty returned for answer, that he never should have promoted Mamat, but that he could deny nothing to His Excellency.

On the following morning the two Chans came to pay their respects to the Ambassador. The former had fully deserved his

new honours by his exemplary conduct; but they were principally solicited for the latter, because when he was at St. Petersburgh he had been honoured with particular notice by the Emperor.

Of the King I shall only now say that we have fully convinced ourselves that he is the most amiable, and the most discreet man of his nation; and it is, therefore, not a matter of wonder that he should have reigned twenty years in Persia.

We received with the insignia of the Order, warrants or firmauns, all worded alike (with the exception of the Ambassador's), and written by the Minister Avdul-Vehab, who, it seems, has the principal management of all writings connected with the business of the State. This is the gentleman with whom, it may be recollected, that I had some discourse relative to astronomy; he continued to the last moment of our intercourse to solicit me to write a book, in two volumes, on the stars; nor would he be satisfied unless he had in-

serted in my firmaun some suitable allusion to astronomy. I subjoin a translation of this precious document, begging to offer my congratulations to those who can understand it.

" In the name of the Holy God!

In this seal there is written: " Power of Providence, the Seal of the State, of this century, in the reign of the Shah Fet-Ali."

" The State resembles the Divine nature; it orders as follows: —

" From the day that the Architect of Providence made visible the position and the firm ground of the State, and finished, with a profound sketch, the plan of the house for the State, upon the chart of his will, and that his firmness had raised into infinity the first of the straight pillars, while he fixed the rule of our eternal happiness, and drew also the immeasurable lines of his consistency, and by sending down the rays of his Almighty power, appeared in great splendour. Now our direct intention and

will is to unite ourself with all States, in order to establish still more strongly the foundation of our own ; the splendour of this perception proceeds from the Luminary of the undertakings of the Shah !

" At this happy epoch, when the Russian Empire stands fortunately in harmony and union with our happy and well-preserved State, and when the Stars of the two great States are also in alliance, as well as our friendship and tried sincerity, — we have, in the centre of our well-inclined heart, determined that every one who stays under the shade of this eternal State, and who, with persevering exertion, ascends the steps of zeal in both States, and who diligently pursues the road of service in both States, shall be promoted to further honours, and be dignified by the grant of an act of our gracious benevolence ; and from the motion of our Sovereign Grace, we do convey to him our wishes for his further honourable distinction. The supplement and the contents of the foregoing is, that when the

High-Titled, High-Standing, the Most Illustrious from his Station, the Most Wise, the Constant, the All-penetrating, the Brave, the Confidant of the Imperial Court, He who is honoured with Alexander's orders and favour, and ornamented with ribbands of glory and power, the Leader of troops to honour, Lieutenant-General Jermoloff, the great Commander in Chief and Ambassador of the famous Russian State, whose understanding rivals Jupiter, and whose thoughts equal Mercury, — arrived at our just Court, by reciprocal desire, we have enlarged the honour and glory of all those who belonged to his suite, by conferring upon them the appropriate order ; to their number belongs, the High-Praised, the High-Standing, the Wise, the particularly Wise Selection of illustrious Christendom, Captain Kotzebue, Architect, who, like a Circle in the Service of both high States, holds the head of obedience on the earth of Submission ; and who, in the basis of friendship of both eternal States, as it were like a point, will never place his foot out of the line of zeal ;

—and whose actions, from the numbers and tables, appear figures of illustrious acts of service, as the revelation of his secrets through talents, places flags in the measured parts of Science, and of the System of the World; the Trabant * of his imagination goes round the World, and the Star of his fidelity rises up the footsteps of performed Services into the higher regions. Wherefore we will to distinguish him with greater honour, by conferring upon him the Order of the Sun and Lion, with diamonds, which insignia distinguish faithful servants in Persia, in order that he may diligently apply himself to the service of both States, and manifest still greater zeal in cementing their friendly agreement.

" It is hereby ordered, that the high-praised, esteemed, and happy Journalists of my blessed Chancery, do register and acknowledge the grant of this order.

" Written in the month Nivala, 1232 Canri."

* Captain Kotzebue himself.

The original is undersigned by the ministers, Mirza Jeffi, Avdul-Vehab, Firidun, Muhamed-Hussein, Muhamed-Seki, Meria, Sinul-Abedina, Jasdul-Lacha, Mussa-ibni-Kiagina, Nisamud-Dewle, Mersuma.*

Translated from the Persian into the Russian language by the Councillor of the Embassy, the Councillor of State and Knight Negri.

The last days of our stay at Sultanie were spent in reciprocal visits among the ministers, who all assured the Ambassador that the King, as well as they themselves, had been so much captivated by His Excellency, that they were truly grieved to part from him. The Prime Minister is even said to have found a tear to guarantee the

* These names are printed as they are given by the Author, although it is apprehended that some of them are inaccurately spelt. — *Translator.*

expression of his sorrow, notwithstanding that, according to report, the expensive honour of maintaining the Russian Embassy, during the whole of its stay at Sultanie, had been committed by the King to his charge. But he is said to be the most opulent of the ministers.

When the King observes any of his subjects becoming too rich, in opposition to his royal will and pleasure, he has recourse to a very amiable expedient, in order to reduce the offender to poverty and beggary. It consists in sending him daily a dish from his kitchen ; an honour, in return for which the High Treasurer would not be satisfied with a less fee than one thousand ducats. Should this proceeding be continued several weeks, it is natural that it must entail poverty upon the wealthiest individual. But if the King be decidedly bent upon the absolute ruin of the person, he fixes on a day on which he dines with him ; an honourable distinction, which reduces absolutely to beggary the person on whom it is bestowed.

There was not any change in the weather during our residence at Sultanie. A remarkably violent wind raged regularly from morning until evening. But the nights were still very cold; indeed the thermometer was frequently at the freezing point. The heat, during the day, was on the average at 19° Reaumur. In the afternoon of the 14th of August, there fell a strong shower of hail-stones, as large as nuts. It lasted above a quarter of an hour, and made the whole horizon white. This occurrence, and the general coldness of the nights in this latitude, plainly show that Sultanie must lie considerably above the level of the sea. The winter, also, is said to be of some duration. There is a striking difference between the climate here and that of Samanarchie, although the latter is at a distance of only twelve wersts, and in a northern direction.

On that account, poisonous animals are less dangerous here. Two of our party were stung by scorpions, but they experi-

enced no further inconvenience than a slight swelling, which soon subsided.

A musician died here of apoplexy; and thus we have altogether lost four men.

Upon the whole, the climate of Sultanie must be very healthy; not one of us was attacked by fever, and some who had brought it with them, even recovered from it. But the dust, which incessantly penetrates every where, and through every thing, is insufferable.

On the 29th of August, the Embassy left their encampment at Sultanie, and reached the town of Sangan on the same evening. We stopped there the following day, to celebrate the anniversary of Saint Alexander; we had music and illuminations on this occasion, and the people were the more willing to participate in our demonstrations of joy, as they were informed that the King had given us a particularly gracious reception, and that permanent relations of amity had been established with the Emperor.

On the 9th of September we arrived at Tauris. The military governor and the English, among whom were Mr. Willock and Dr. Campbell, who had left Sultanie before us, came to meet the Embassy.

The Ambassador had still many points to settle here, connected with the boundary of both countries, and our stay was protracted eleven days.

We led such a pleasant life with the excellent English, that we often forgot that we were in Persia. Mr. Campbell had once the civility to assure me, that one seldom met with an Embassy composed generally of so many agreeable and well-informed people as our's was; but we can, on the other hand, without flattery, assure that gentleman, that we never had the satisfaction to meet with so many pleasant and sociable Englishmen as we found at Tauris. It is, indeed, seldom that small communities of men, when placed at a distance from their native country, continue to be influenced by the prejudices and the reserve of polished society.

On the 15th of September, we celebrated, in company with the English, the anniversary of the coronation of the Emperor, on which occasion Abbas-Mirza had the civility to send us fireworks.

On the day preceding our departure, the Prince sent a shawl to each of us; and to Colonel Jermoloff, the Ambassador's cousin, he presented a ring, which he took from his own hand.

When the Ambassador offered to Abbas-Mirza the Emperor's presents, among which were a service of porcelain, diamond plumes, &c. he merely selected a superb gun and a sabre, saying: "This belongs to me, the rest is too handsome for me, and belongs to the King."

We left Tauris on the 20th of September, with most favourable weather, the heat being moderate and the sky serene.

On the 24th of September we passed the Araxes, and although the straight road to Nakatshevan does not lead along the river, several of the party determined to proceed

by that way, in order to visit the ruins of the ancient city of Julfa, and we accomplished our object without the knowledge or observation of the Persians. Some remains of a bridge, a small tower, and a cemetery of immense extent, are the only objects to be seen. The river winds romantically round the ruins, through chasms of stupendous rocks. A small Armenian village lies in lonely solitude amidst this grey wreck of antiquity; its inhabitants received us with joy, for it seldom falls to their lot to see a Christian. They heavily complained of the oppressive treatment of the government. "We are not the only Christians," they said, "who fly for protection, as it were, into the bosom of nature: the river pursues its course through the rocks into still more frightful recesses, where pious Christians, like us, suffer patiently, and, like us, hope for deliverance."

As it would not take us much out of our way, we resolved to follow the course of the Araxes, until within a short distance of

Nakatshevan, where it flows over a level ground. A small footpath led us along the steep banks of the stream, which rose gradually, and arched over us so that we were shut out from the sun, and had before us a complete representation of the scenery of Dariella in the Caucasus. We saw a miserable village on the other side of the river, but the rapidity of the torrent would not admit of our crossing it. The inhabitants welcomed us with signs of joy, and when we left them, remained by the side of the river gazing at us with looks of sorrow.

Our guide assured us that a convent lay on the other side of a high rock, accessible only to those who knew the path, and were very dexterous in climbing. The scenery continued to increase in horror; and we were frequently obliged to dismount, in order to spring over dark chasms in the rocks. On a sudden turn of the river we were surprised to see a pretty convent, close to a small village.

The inhabitants, who probably at first

considered us to be Persians, ran about in confusion; but when, after their first distrust, they discovered that we were Christians, they all advanced towards us, headed by a venerable ecclesiastic, who welcomed us with tears starting from his eyes. The bells began ringing, and the whole party proceeded to the church, where prayers were said, and re-echoed by the whole congregation, who melted into tears.

After the conclusion of divine service, we posted ourselves on the green, and each villager brought his best fare, anxious to share it with a Christian. The priest had, as usual, the best wine. At last we rose and departed from these good people, to whom we recommended as much patience, and offered as much consolation as we could suggest.

They continued long to look after us, until we ascended a hill, from which the country runs flat to Nakatshevan, and at the foot of which lies the fort of Bessarabas. We then lost sight of the convent, and

reached our quarters for the night, well pleased with our excursion.

This suffering little community of Christians, which has fled for security to the banks of the Araxes, subsists by fishing and the breeding of cattle. The latter is driven about among steep rocks, in places where I never could have supposed that a man could make his way, much less an unwieldy ox.

It is singular enough that the banks of the Araxes, which are every where so level, should form here a granitic hollow.

On the 29th of September, the Embassy reached Erivan, where tents had been pitched for its reception, in the Sardar's garden, on the banks of the river.

The Sardar himself was at Tauris. We found in his summer-house, round the basin, an immense variety of fruit, which was very refreshing in this sultry weather. His house stood on the opposite side of the river, and close to our camp; and it was, therefore, no wonder that his women, of whom there were sixty, should have gratified their curiosity by

looking at us from the windows. We also did our best to look, and we saw many a pretty prisoner's face gazing with looks of sorrow. Some of them were dressed with taste. This curious scene had lasted several hours, when an eunuch came to our camp, for the absurd purpose of prohibiting us from looking at the ladies; but on perceiving that he was only laughed at, he went away, and we soon afterwards saw him cudgelling the poor women unmercifully. They all disappeared, except one, who must either have been the favourite, or endowed with great strength, for she wrested the stick out of the eunuch's hands, and gave him a good beating. She then threw the stick out of the window, and continued sitting there for a quarter of an hour, after which she rose and went away. Every shutter was then closed, and there was an end of the diversion.

On the 2d of October, we reached the frontier of our country, amidst loud exclamations of joy. We found a body of

Cossacks, and a company of grenadiers together with a field-piece, ready to receive us, and the Persian escort were dismissed with handsome presents. Najar-Alibek-Chan, who had been promoted to that dignity at the request of the Ambassador, remained with us a few days longer, because the Ambassador and all the members of the mission had become much attached to him. He was greatly affected on parting from us, and His Excellency gave him many handsome presents, together with a box ornamented with diamonds, accompanied by a document, stating that it was presented to him by the whole mission as a token of remembrance, on account of his excellent conduct.

The Embassy reached Tiflis on the 10th of October, being the anniversary of the day on which it had arrived there last year.

All the companions of my journey will, I am convinced, heartily join in the public expression of thanks which we owe to our chief. He has behaved with friendly indul-

gence to us all, and in a brotherly manner shared with us many an hour of hardship. His conduct does honour to his heart. He has cemented us together by ties of intimacy, which we found it painful to break on separating at Tiflis.

THE END.

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